THE
SANDFORD FLEMING
LIBRARY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/christiansabbath0000revb

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

OPINIONS OF THE VOLUME.

FROM THE REV. J. C. RYLE.

I have known the Essays on the Christian Sabbath from the time they were first published, and value them highly.

I regard the volume as a treasury of admirable scriptural argument on a subject which is most grievously misunderstood, and have often recommended it to my brethren in the ministry.

If its circulation can be extended, I think it will be a common benefit to the Church of Christ.

J. C. RYLE.

Helmingham Rectory, Suffolk, April 2, 1856.

FROM THE REV. T. GUTHRIE, D.D.

I am delighted to hear that a cheap edition of that admirable volume, "The Christian Sabbath, considered in its Various Aspects," is about to be published.

It is worthy of the cause and of the very eminent men by whom it was written. I should wish to see a copy of it in every house and household library in the kingdom.

THOMAS GUTHRIE.

Edinburgh, April 2, 1856.

FROM THE REV. J. SHERMAN.

"The Christian Sabbath" is a volume of deep and lasting interest. It answers the difficulties, enforces the obligation, and illustrates the advantages of Sabbath sanctification in a manner superior to any work with which I am acquainted. It is a book for the philosopher and the Christian. It would remove the doubts of the sceptic if he would yield to truth

and reason. The young man would bless the day that he perused its pages, and heeded its counsels. The believer would have his faith confirmed by its arguments and illustrations. If the master of a family would read to his household one of its brief treatises every Sabbath for sixteen weeks, what information would be given, what a heavenly influence diffused, and, by the blessing of God, what preparation made for an eternal Sabbath! A full reward be given to the authors of these admirable treatises by "the Lord of the Sabbath," in causing multitudes through their means to hallow "the Lord's-day."

JAMES SHERMAN.

Blackheath, April 1, 1856.

FROM THE REV. J. ANGUS, D.D.

I rejoice to learn that these admirable little tracts on the Sabbath are to be published in a cheap form. Small books were among the mightiest agencies of the great Reformation, and small books are still effecting great changes amongst us for good and for evil. The brevity of these treatises, the diversity of authorship, the eminence of the writers, the harmonious variety of view, the earnestness and general soundness of their appeals—all adapt the volume to the wants of the age. Those who wish to secure for all classes a peaceful, holy, joyous Sabbath, cannot do better than circulate these treatises by thousands.

Stepney, April 3, 1856. JOSEPH ANGUS.

FROM THE REV. J. BROWN, D.D.

"The thoughts of the Lord," embodied in His institutions, "are very deep." They are far-reaching. They go to gain numerous, varied, important ends, by few and simple means. Take for an example the institutions of Paradise—the Sabbath and marriage. How different, how improved, would the state of the world be were those institutions universally prevalent. A regularly-recurring day of secular rest and special religious exercise—in what other way would so much evil be prevented and good done? How conducive, in the first aspect, to bodily health,

mental soundness, intellectual improvement, and the general sweet working of the machinery of social life! How necessary, in the second, to a healthful, vigorous state of true religion, in all its forms, public, domestic, and secret! He who thinks in this way must feel satisfaction in finding suitable means employed for enlightening and impressing the public mind on this subject. The circulation by tens of thousands of this collection of tracts, seems well fitted to serve this purpose. They contain the matured views of some of the best men of our times; and I entirely agree with the terse remark of Mr. Noel, in the preface, that "a series of good tracts upon the subject is probably better than a single good book; because the best thoughts of many are likely to be more varied and more forcible than the best thoughts of one." That the Divine blessing may richly rest on this, and on all Christianly benevolent enterprises of him who is thus "casting bread on the waters" is my most cordial wish.

Arthur's Lodge, April 3, 1856. JOHN BROWN.

FROM THE REV. W. ARTHUR.

The volume entitled "The Christian Sabbath," contains such a store of truth and goodness collected by hands so able, and placed in aspects so diversified, that its universal diffusion must be a blessing, and its perusal a real benefit to any person, rich or poor. Would that every house in the United Kingdom contained it; and yet more, would that every working man would read it.

London, April 17, 1856. WILLIAM ARTHUR.

THE DAY OF REST.

Tracts for Working Men and their Firesides.

I. Every Man's Right to the Weekly Day of Rest.
Rev. WILLIAM ARNOT, Glasgow.

II. Every Man's Need of a Weekly Day of Rest.
Professor MILLER, Edinburgh.

III. Every Man's Duty to Avail Himself of his Sabbath Rights. Rev. JOHN CAIRNS, Berwick.

IV. Seven Days' Work for Six Days' Pay—a Problem for Working Men. Rev. WILLIAM ARTHUR, London.

V. If you Travel, thousands must Toil; or, do unto others as you would wish others to do unto you.
Rev. WILLIAM BROCK, London.

VI. A Voice from Workshops.
ALEXANDER SWAN, Esq., late of Folkestone.

VII. The Half-Holiday for Working Men—Is it desirable? is it practicable? would it conduce to the right Observance of the Sabbath?
Rev. Dr. GUTHRIE, Edinburgh.

VIII. A Voice from Firesides; or, the Sabbath and the Family. Rev. Dr. ANDREW THOMSON, Edinburgh.

IX. The Sabbath and the Fine Arts.
Professor Dr. GEORGE WILSON, Edinburgh.

X. The plea of Amusement an insult and a delusion.
Rev. EDWARD YOUNG, Bristol.

XI. The Book of Sports. Rev. ISLAY BURNS, Dundee.

XII. Continental Sabbath and its Lessons.
Rev. JOHN KER, Glasgow.

XIII. The Two Sabbath Evenings—a Retrospect.
Rev. Dr. JAMES HAMILTON, London.

XIV. Prevalent Forms of Sabbath Desecration.
Rev. J. W. BORLAND, Glasgow.

XV. Prevalent Apologies for Sabbath Desecration.
Rev. H. M. M'GILL, Glasgow.

XVI. A Whole Sabbath or None.
Rev. Dr. ANDREW SOMERVILLE, Edinburgh.

XVII. Picture of Britain without a Sabbath.
Rev. Canon MILLER, Birmingham.

XVIII. Who is on the side of the Sabbath?
Rev. ARCHIBALD WATSON, Glasgow.

XIX. Your Sabbath Example. Rev. JAMES SHERMAN, London.

XX. A Well-spent Sabbath, how it tells on the Week.
Rev. Canon STOWELL, Manchester.

XXI. A Well-spent Sabbath—Heaven begun.
Rev. J. A. JAMES, Birmingham.

THE

CHRISTIAN SABBATH,

CONSIDERED IN ITS VARIOUS ASPECTS.

BY

Ministers of Different Denominations.

WITH PREFACE,

BY THE

HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL.

"God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it."—GEN. ii. 3.
"The Sabbath was made for man."—MARK ii. 10.
"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day."—REV. i. 10.

PEOPLE'S EDITION.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND,

(DEPOSITORIES, 13, SOUTH ST. ANDREW-STREET, EDINBURGH; AND 120, & 121, QUEEN-STREET, GLASGOW);

AND SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

1856.

GRATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY 1963

HG91
C46
BV
113
C57
1856

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE loose and erroneous views which have appeared in many quarters regarding the Sabbath, led to the preparation of this volume. It was thought that a work was needed, which should present in a clear and distinct form the Scriptural authority for, and the beneficent design and influence of, the Day of holy Rest.

The Writers of the Essays have been taken from all the leading religious denominations of this country; and may be fairly regarded as expressing the sentiments of the entire living Church on the interpretation of the Sabbath Law. And it must be gratifying that, with such variety of denomination and diversity of gift, there exists such perfect unity of judgment on this all-important subject.

JOHN HENDERSON.

GLASGOW, *May*, 1856.

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
SANDFORD FLEMING LIBRARY

CONTENTS.

PREFACE

I.

The Divine Authority and Early Origin of the Sabbath—Its Universal and Permanent Obligations; and the Change of the Day from the Seventh to the First under the Christian Dispensation. By the late RALPH WARDLAW, D.D., Congregational Church, Glasgow.

I. The Sabbath instituted by Divine authority when man was created.
This position proved by Gen. ii. 1—3 12
That Genesis ii. 1—3 records the date at which the Sabbath was instituted, and does not refer prospectively to a subsequent institution, is proved by—
First. The language of the passage 13
Second. The contents of the passage 13
Third. Words of Christ in Mark ii. 27 13
Fourth. The apostle's argument in Heb. iv. 3—8 13
Fifth. The wide-spread practice of dividing time into weeks . 14
Sixth. The terms in which the Sabbath is first mentioned in Exodus, Ex. xvi. 14
These terms imply that the Sabbath had been previously instituted; because they are the terms in which an observance already existing is recognised, not those in which a new observance is formally instituted. This is manifest—
1. *Generally*, from the natural impression which they are fitted to leave on the reader 15
2. *Specially*, from the two facts—
(*a*) That no reason is annexed to the injunction to make the people collect on the sixth day manna sufficient to serve on the seventh 15
(*b*) That the act of the elders related in verse 22 implied that the Sabbath was already known and familiar . . . 15
Gen. ii. 1—3 and Ex. xvi., taken together, constitute an irrefragable argument 16
Seventh. The terms of the Fourth Commandment . . . 17
Expression *remember* supposes previous knowledge, and consequently previous existence of the thing to be remembered; and the "reason annexed" carries us back to the date at which this existence commenced . . 17
These two objections replied to—
1. That "little or no notice of the Sabbath is to be found in the inspired account of the antediluvian and patriarchal ages" 18
2. That "God is said to have '*made known* to Israel His holy Sabbath'" 19

45455

II. The Sabbath is of universal and permanent obligation.
This is implied in the date of its institution 21
And confirmed by such considerations as—
First. The universality of the design of the Sabbath 21
Second. The moral character of the Sabbath, which is evidenced—
1. By its nature 21
2. By its position in the Decalogue 22
Third. Our Lord's representation of it as "made for man" . 22
Man to be here understood of the *human race* . . . 22
Fourth. The untenableness of the objections raised by opponents 23
Such objections are—
1. That "if we are bound by the *law of observance*, we must be bound also by the *law of penalty* for infraction." Answer . 23
2. That "if we are bound to keep the *Sabbath*, we are equally bound to keep it on the *seventh* day." Answer . . . 25
III. Under the Christian dispensation, the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to the first.
This position is supported—
First. By the probability of such a change, afforded by its *reasonableness* 25
The fact that the Sabbath is commemorative of *creation* does not exclude additional reasons for its celebration. Shown from Deut. v. 12—15 26
Redemption is an additional reason for its celebration; and inasmuch as redemption, in the Divine estimate of greatness, takes the precedence of creation, the commemoration of redemption ought to take amongst men the precedence of the commemoration of creation 27
Second. By what is equivalent to a direct precept, viz., apostolic practice recorded in Scripture. The practice adopted and countenanced by the apostles in this matter, is shown by the *facts and examples recorded in*—
1. Acts xx. 6, 7 28
2. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2 28
3. Rev. i. 10 29
Third. By inspired precept. Heb. iv. 9, 10 30
The pretence of those who would remove the Sabbath, on the ground of our now being *under a more spiritual dispensation* . . . 36

II.

Traces and Indications of the Primitive Sabbath in many of the Institutions and Observances of the Ancient World. By the Rev. JOHN JORDAN, Vicar of Enstone, Oxon.

I. Absence of such traces would not imply non-existence of the Sabbath 40
This fact not a substitute for, but a confirmation of, the positive proof of the Divine institution of the Sabbath 41
II. Traces of Sabbath in the Antediluvian period 43
First. Day on which Cain and Abel sacrificed 43
Second. Importance attached to the number Seven . . . 44
Third. Division of time into weeks implied in occurrences connected with the Deluge 45
III. Traces of the Sabbath in the Postdiluvian period . . . 48
These traces to be found in three different channels, corresponding to the threefold division of the family of Noah . . 49
First. Traces in the history of the family of Shem.
1. In the Abrahamic branch.
(*a*) Division of time into weeks of seven days . . . 50
(*b*) Reverence shown for the number Seven 51
Force of this argument 52

(*c*) Hebdomadal division recognised in the Passover . . 52
(*d*) Occurrences in the camp of Israel antecedent to the giving of the law from Sinai 53
2. In other branches of the Shemitic family 55
Second. Traces in the history of the family of Japheth.
1. *Seventh* day mentioned as "holy," or otherwise distinguished, by Hesiod, Homer, Callimachus, &c. 56
2. Mystical use of the number Seven by Greek and Latin poets 57
3. Division of time into weeks of seven days amongst the Saxons 57
4. Division of time into weeks of seven days, and reverence for the number Seven amongst the early Hindoos . . . 58
Third. Traces in the history of the family of Ham 59
1. Babylon.—Mystical use of the number Seven implied in the structure of the temple of Belus 60
2. Egypt.—Pyramids built by the children of Ham upon their entrance into Egypt after the dispersion at Babel . . 61
Mystical employment of the number Seven displayed by the structure of the Pyramids 62
3. Other parts of Africa 62
IV. Summation of this argument. Its bearing on the question of the primitive institution of the Sabbath 63
Two inferences—
First. The Sabbath not a mere Judaical rite, passing into desuetude with other Mosaic observances 64
Second. The Sabbath not confined to one nation, people, or language, but a boon conferred on the whole human race . . 65
This boon or grant a *privilege*, a common *right* of man . . 65
Its *excellency* 66
The hallowing of the Sabbath a *test* of inward sanctification . 66

III.

The Sabbath not a mere Judaical Appointment; with an Examination of the more Prevalent Arguments by which it has been attempted to show that the Sabbath Law has been Abolished or Relaxed. By the Rev. Andrew Thomson, B.A., D.D., United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh.

State of the question 69
Examination of objections to the argument for universality and perpetuity of the Sabbath.
I. Paley's objection from the alleged absence of any intimation in the Old Testament of the existence of the Sabbath previous to the giving of the law from Sinai, and construing Gen. ii. 1—3 as *proleptical* 70
Answer—
First. The argument is inconclusive in form 71
Second. It is founded upon a misstatement of fact, for—
1. Division of time into weeks implies a Sabbath 72
2. Israelites were delivered from Egypt, partly that they might have liberty to keep the Sabbath 73
Transaction recorded in Exodus xvi. concerns not an observance *instituted*, but an observance *restored* 74
3. Gen. ii. 1—3 relates what took place, not merely *in reference to*, but *at*, the creation 76
4. Sabbath adapted not to the Jew only, but to man . . . 77
5. Sabbath received a place in the Decalogue 78
II. Examination of objections from passages in the life of Christ, *e. g.*, His working of miracles on the Sabbath, and His disciples' plucking the ears of corn 80

III. Objection from change of day, and certain passages in the apostolic epistles 83
IV. Miscellaneous objections and popular fallacies, *e. g.*—
That it is an arbitrary trenching on the enjoyments of the artisan 87
That the Christian will make every day a Sabbath . . . 91
That the evidence is too dubious to render the observance obligatory 93
The authority of Luther and Calvin 94

IV.

The Adaptation of the Sabbath to the Temporal Well-being of Men, and more especially to the Working Classes; with Application of the Argument to Sabbath Railway Travelling. By DAVID KING, LL.D., United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow.

I. Our celestial and terrestrial interests, &c. 103
II. The Sabbath a great temporal blessing, viewed as a day of rest. 104
This has special reference to the working classes . . . 104
Civilisation has hitherto increased the necessity for toil . . 105
Constant toil enfeebling and dispiriting 106
Constant toil degrades and vitiates 107
Constant toil demoralises 108
The proper antidote to these evils is the Sabbath . . . 108
III. The Sabbath a great temporal blessing, as favouring a cultivation of all the proprieties of life 109
IV. The Sabbath a great temporal blessing, as it aids natural affection and domestic fellowship 111
V. Application of the argument of this paper to the question of Sabbath railway trains 111

V.

The Adaptation of the Sabbath to Man's Intellectual and Moral Nature. By JAMES HAMILTON, D.D., English Presbyterian Church, London.

Picture of a well-spent Sabbath in a domestic circle. . . . 120
Restorative influences of a well-spent Sabbath manifest on the Monday 125
Intellectual and moral benefits of a well-spent Sabbath—
First. It is a brisk mental restorative to the hard-wrought workman 127
Second. It is a brisk mental restorative to the hard-wrought mind 128
Third. It affords opportunity to prepare for immortality . . 130

VI.

Several Prevailing Forms of Sabbath Desecration Exposed. By the Rev. PETER M'OWAN, Wesleyan Chapel, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

The Sabbath is desecrated—
I. When men are at no pains to prepare their hearts, or to set their affairs in order, for its due sanctification, before it arrives. . 136
When this is chargeable on Shareholders 137
————————Parents 137
————————Masters 138
————————Heads of Families . . . 138
This sin a chief cause of the inefficiency of Gospel ordinances . 138

II. When only a portion of its hours are devoted to sacred purposes 139
The distinction of "*church hours*" as the only hours from which business or pleasure may be exempted, unscriptural . . 139
III. When men observe its rest and attend its ordinances merely out of deference to public opinion, or a regard to outward decency . 142
IV. When it is devoted to secular purposes and servile labour . . 146
Works of *necessity and mercy* 146
When the Sabbath may be said to be desecrated in this way
by medical men 146
Ship-owners 147
Owners of factories and other public works . . 147
Shop-keepers 147
Bad policy of Sabbath desecration 148
Sabbath desecration for the sake of gain implies atheistical distrust in Providence 148
Sabbath trade in intoxicating liquors 148
Extent of the provisions of the Fourth Commandment—
First. "Nor thy son, nor thy daughter" . . . 150
Second. "Nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant" 151
Third. "Nor thy cattle" 153
Practice of holding cattle-markets or fairs on *Mondays* 154
V. When it is spent in convivial feasting and worldly discourse . 155
——————walks and excursions of mere pleasure . . 157
——————visiting places of amusement and
——————light and unspiritual reading 158
Exhortation to those who fear God 162

VII.

The Sabbath a Happy Day, viewed especially in its Influences, when rightly observed, on the Religion of Individuals. By JOHN HANNAH, D.D., Wesleyan Chapel, Didsbury.

The Sabbath *blessed* and *blessing*, both under the Old dispensation and the New 164
The Sabbath is a happy day to the Christian man, because—
I. It affords a peaceful rest from all that fatigues, molests, and distresses him, in the ordinary prosecution of business . . . 167
It affords relief from hard toil 168
——————worldly cares and anxieties . . . 169
——————the bustle and the turmoil of worldly intercourse 170
II. In its own institution and objects, it directly suggests topics of most pleasing and edifying meditation 171
It recalls the memory of creation 172
——————redemption 174
It points to glory 176
III. It is a day of the most chosen and profitable employment . 179
It calls to the public worship of God 179
It calls to the searching of the Scriptures, reading of useful books on practical religion, and personal application of Divine truth 180
It calls to the discharge of offices of mercy to the ignorant, sick, and poor 181
General conclusion 183
Duty which the Sabbath, thus viewed, imposes on professing Christians 184
Application of this view to the allegations of those who plead for what they term recreation on the Lord's-day 185

VIII

Biographical Notices on the Subject of Sabbath Observance, showing its Influence on the Piety of Individuals. By William Innes, D.D., Baptist Church, Elder-street, Edinburgh.

Case of Sir Matthew Hale 187
—— Rev. Jonathan Edwards 188
—— John Howard 189
—— William Wilberforce 193
—— Dr. Chalmers 196
—— Rev. Charles Simeon 197
—— Rev. Joshua Gilpin 199
—— The mother and her children 201
Result of the writer's own observation 203
Cases contrasting the evil flowing from Sabbath desecration, with the good resulting from Sabbath observance 206
The Missionary Williams 206
A London tradesman 207
End of a Sabbath-breaking youth 208
Conclusion 210

IX.

The Influence of the Sabbath on Domestic Piety. By William Glover, A.M., D.D., Greenside Parish, Edinburgh.

The Sabbath not a Jewish peculiarity 212
Divine wisdom and benevolence of the domestic constitution . . 216
1. Influence of the Sabbath on the piety of husbands and wives . 219
2. —— the pious training of children . 222
Sacred associations connected with the return of the Sabbath . 224
Blessing of Sabbath family devotion and instruction . . 226
3. Influence of the Sabbath on domestics 231
Bearing of this argument on the objection, "Every day a Sabbath" 233
Duty which this argument enforces on heads of families . . . 233
Conclusion 234

X.

Historical Notices on the subject of Sabbath Observance, showing its Influence on the Prosperity of Churches. By W. M. Hetherington, LL.D., D.D., Free Church, Edinburgh.

Preliminary remarks 236
The Churches of the apostolic period observed, as far as their condition permitted, the Christian Sabbath 238
The Churches of the apostolic period were prosperous . . . 240
The sudden close of this prosperity coeval with disregard of the Sabbath 241
Amidst extensive apostacy the Waldensian Church remained faithful 243
The Waldensian Church distinguished for Sabbath observance . 243
Prosperity of the Waldensian Church 244
Succeeding desecration during the prevalence of Popery . . . 245
Progressive character of the Protestant Reformation . . . 246
Position and views of the Reformers in reference to the Sabbath question 247
In proportion as—1. the Lutheran, 2. the Calvinistic Churches, became lax in theory and practice as to the Sabbath, their prosperity ebbed 249

Recapitulation of the account of the Sabbath question at the Reformation 251
The Lutheran Churches 252
The Churches of Switzerland and Holland 252
Sabbath desecration at Geneva, as recently witnessed . . . 253
The Church of France 253
The British Churches 254
Rise and decline of religious prosperity in England shown to have been simultaneous with the rise and decline of Sabbath observance 254
The same has been the case in Scotland 256
Conclusions deducible from the preceding narrations . . . 260

XI.

Indirect Influence of the Sabbath on the General Prosperity of Nations, and especially on their Intelligence, Trade, and Commerce, Social Order, and Liberties. By JAMES SEATON REID, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Glasgow.

The conclusions drawn in the preceding essays brought to bear upon this point 264
I. The Sabbath elevates the *intelligence* of a nation 269
Meaning of the term "intelligence" in this connexion . . 269
The Sabbath does this by bringing the people into close and familiar contact with moral and religious truth . . 271
Pilgrim's Progress—Prize Essays of working men . . . 272
II. The Sabbath is instrumental in benefiting the trade and commerce of a nation 273
Because—1. It augments the intelligence of those engaged in such avocations 273
2. And chiefly, it promotes their honesty, integrity, and patient industry . . . 274
This bears especially on the employed classes 276
Impolicy of Sabbath labour in railways and post-offices . . 277
III. The Sabbath is intimately connected with the preservation of social order in a nation 278
Because—1. It is indispensable to the existence and extension of religion in a community . 281
2. It tends to unite all classes of its observers in the bonds of a common brotherhood . 282
IV. The Sabbath is favourable to the preservation of the liberties of a nation 283
It secures uprightness and confidence between rulers and ruled 283
True liberty has blessed those nations only among whom religion and her Sabbaths have been reverenced . . . 284
The Continent—Great Britain 285

XII.

The Sin and Evils of Sabbath Mails. By ANDREW SYMINGTON, D.D., Reformed Presbyterian Church, Paisley.

Peculiar prejudice against this position 288
Two modes of conducting the argument; viz., by an appeal to economics, and by an appeal to scriptural authority . . . 289
I. Sabbath mails are sinful 291
Objections to this position answered—
First. That "Sabbath mails are required by the claims and urgencies of business" 294

Second. "Sabbath mails occupy but a portion of the day" . . 297
Third. "The Sabbath law permits works of necessity and mercy" 298
Fourth. "The occurrence of sickness and death, requiring the immediate attendance of friends, justifies Sabbath mails" . 299
Fifth. "Principle of liberty" 300
II. Sabbath mails are productive of evil 302
They deprive great numbers of respite from labour, of the means of moral improvement, &c. 302
They are demoralising 304
They provoke national judgments 305
The extent of the sin and evils of Sabbath mails 306
At whose door do this sin and these evils lie, and by what means shall they be removed? 308
An appeal to the sound economist, the patriot, the philanthropist, and the Christian 309

XIII.

The Law of the Sabbath, the Proper Statute of Religion, identical in Principle and invariable in Force through all Times and Dispensations. By RICHARD WINTER HAMILTON, LL.D., D.D., Congregational Church, Leeds.

The Sabbath law is the proper statute of religion 316
Animal rest is required on the Sabbath only as involved in its essential holy rest 317
The Sabbath under all dispensations 319
The Sabbath under the Christian dispensation 320
Christ's authority to change the Sabbath 322
That a change in the day does not affect the essence of the Sabbath, proved from the alterations which took place in the day, previous to Christian dispensation 326
The facts of redemption constitute a sufficient ground for justifying a change in the day of the Sabbath, because—
First. They are the final causes of creation 327
Second. A spiritual creation, being superior to that which is material and even intellectual, deserves its distinct remembrancer and honour 328
Third. The Jewish dispensation could not debar the juster and higher appropriation of the Sabbath 329
That the day of the Sabbath was actualy changed is shown—
First. From the practice of Christ after His resurrection . . 331
Second. From the practice of the Apostles and of the Churches with their countenance 333
Apostolic practice is equivalent to direct precept 337
Principle upon which apostolic practice proceeded 338
Reply to the objection founded upon the passage—"One man esteemeth one day above another," &c. 339
Sabbath authority undisputed among the first Christians . . 341

XIV.

The Spiritual Observance of the Lord's-day. By Rev. EDWARD BICKERSTETH, Rector of Watton, Herts.

Origin and meaning of the title "Lord's-day" 346
The lesson conveyed by this title 347
Duties implied in a spiritual observance of the Lord's-day—
I. Everything that may impede the spiritual observance must be laid aside 348
This includes the laying aside of—
First. Daily business. 349

Second. Worldly pleasures 350
Third. Idle conversation 351
Fourth. Vain thoughts 352
How this is to be attained 353
II. Special attention must be given to those duties which we are specially called on to discharge 353
This implies that—
First. We aim at making family and social conversation on this day specially cheerful and edifying . . 354
Second. We let our meals on this day be simple and plain 355
Third. Our public devotions should be regular and serious, earnest and constant 356
Fourth. An important place be given to family instruction on this day 357
Fifth. The employment of retired moments should be devotional and scriptural 357
Sixth. Opportunities for works of charity be embraced . 358
Seventh. The Lord Jesus Christ is to be magnified . . 359
The blessedness of such an employment of the Sabbath consists in—
First. The solid peace of mind which it confers . . . 360
Second. The direct blessing on the soul which it obtains from the Lord 361
Third. The large blessing which it diffuses on all around . . 361
Fourth. The national blessedness directly connected with the sanctification of the Sabbath 362
Fifth. The real help gained for all week-day duties, both physically and spiritually 363
Sixth. The preparation which this observance of the earthly Sabbath gives for the heavenly and eternal Sabbath . . 365
The objections urged against this duty 365
Exhortation to those aiming at a fulfilment of this duty . . . 367

XV.

The Blessing promised on the Sabbath Sanctified, and the Penalty annexed to the Neglect or Profanation of it. By STEWART BATES, D.D., Reformed Presbyterian Church, Glasgow.

Connexion of the Sabbath with some of the most merciful works of God—
First. It was constituted a memorial of creation . . . 369
Second. It was a memorial to the Jews of the deliverance from Egypt 370
Third. It was a symbol of sanctification 371
Fourth. It has been constituted a memorial of redemption by Christ 371
Sabbath blessings promised in Scripture to the *individual*—
First. He is exempted from the toils and solicitudes which are the common lot of men on other days 374
Second. He is blessed in the cultivation of his intellectual and moral nature 374
Third. He is blessed in the observance of the public ordinances of religion 375
Blessings which the Sabbath confers on *nations* 380
The remission of the special penalties annexed by the law of Moses to Sabbath desecration, does not imply the repeal of the Sabbath law 382
These penalties teach the guilt which God attaches to Sabbath desecration 383
Instances in the Jewish history of the manifestation of God's displeasure at Sabbath-breaking, apart from the judicial code . 383

Summation of this argument 386
Testimony of modern experience to the connexion between Sabbath observance by, and the prosperity of, nations 387

XVI.

Concluding Practical Address:—The Sabbath—Its Religious Observance a National Duty and a National Blessing. By the Rev. John Angell James, Congregational Church, Birmingham.

I. Religion is essential to the well-being of a nation . . . 392
First. By its own nature and tendency 393
Second. By the providential arrangements and interpositions which it secures 393
II. The general observance of the Sabbath by a nation is essential to its religion 395
Testimony of d'Aubigné to the influence of Sabbath observance on Britain's prosperity 398
III. The general and cordial co-operation of all classes of the community is required to maintain the observance of the Sabbath, and to resist the encroachments upon its sanctity, which in this age are in progress 400
An appeal to the several classes of the community for their co-operation in this matter—
To the Queen 401
To the rulers of our country 401
To the senators of the land 402
To the editors and publishers of our periodical literature . . 404
To the ministers of religion 406
To Sunday-school teachers 407
To merchants, manufacturers, and tradespeople . . . 409
To professors of religion 410
To Britons 412

PREFACE.

I. The Sabbath, which was consecrated in Paradise when man was innocent (Gen. ii. 3), is much more necessary now, when men are fallen and tempted. Instituted to commemorate the work of creation (Gen. i. 31, ii. 1-3), it is not less useful now when it commemorates, together with the works of God in nature, His greater work of redemption. (John xx. 19, 26; Rev. i. 10.) The law of the Sabbath, which the Almighty himself proclaimed to Israel, and wrote on a table of stone, with nine other laws of universal and eternal obligation, to show its perpetual importance to the welfare of men (Exod. xx. 1, xxxi. 18, xxxii. 15), has lost nothing of its value from the lapse of ages, the progress of civilisation, and the increase of secular knowledge. The hearty consecration of that day, to which God has attached such important blessings (Isa. lvi. 2, lviii. 13, 14; Ezek. xx. 10-24; Neh. xiii. 18), must still secure His approbation; and, since our Lord has declared that "the Sabbath is made for man" (Mark

ii. 27), it must be well adapted to promote both his spiritual and his temporal welfare.

1. It has ever been dear to Christians. Many of them have owed to it their conversion. To all of them it is the occasion of spiritual improvement. Tempted to excessive labour on other days, they feel that, but for this command to restrict their thoughts on one day in seven to the exercise of religion, they would soon be almost wholly absorbed in worldly occupations. Now, on the contrary, their Sabbath occupations restore to religion its ascendancy over their minds, and lend them new spiritual strength for the engagements of the week. On this day they feel the comfort of a spiritual rest, in which they may examine their religious progress, reflect upon their duty, meditate on the great truths of revelation, and prepare for eternity. If I am not greatly mistaken, Christians in general feel that they owe much of their growth in godliness, and even of their consistency, to the Sabbath. God can do all things, but He acts by means in His government of the world; and among means, the Sabbath ranks with those which are the most necessary to our welfare.

It is likewise important to consider what an amount of benevolent Christian effort has been created by the institution of the Sabbath. If all those who have to secure their livelihood by bodily or mental exertion, were obliged to labour through seven days of the week as they

now labour through six of them, how few would have time or strength to visit the poor, to teach the young, or to speak of Christ to the ungodly! But through the ordinance of the Sabbath, hundreds of thousands of persons in this country, who devote six days to hard labour, bodily or mental, give a part of their Sabbath to the religious instruction of the young and ignorant. Without the Sabbath, nearly all the inappreciable good which is now done by Sabbath Schools, and much of that which attends the visiting of the sick and distressed in cities, would vanish from the land.

2. The Sabbath is dear to Christians because it is a day which God has given to the working classes for the best and noblest purposes. These now receive for the work of six days what, in the absence of the Sabbath, they would receive for the work of seven days. The wages of labour for seven days in this land, were the Sabbath to be abolished, would exactly equal the present wages for the labour of six days; because wages are determined, not by the absolute value of labour, but by the competition for employment. The Sabbath is, therefore, a clear gain to working men. It is a seventh part of their time which God has mercifully secured for them, without any temporal loss whatever. He has given it to all who labour hard, in order that they may obtain long and invigorating repose when overtasked, and may recruit their

exhausted strength by rest from what would be otherwise ceaseless toil. He has given it to them, that while their bodies, which are wearied with weekly toil, may rest, their minds, which during the week are condemned to inaction, may be exercised. For six days the mechanic must rivet his attention during all his vigorous hours upon his monotonous task; but on the Sabbath he may read and think as much as he will. What the air and the bright sunshine are to his body, which has been pent up during the week in the workshop, that all the varieties of sacred knowledge are to his mind, which has been no less confined to his work. Among these he expatiates, breathes freely, and grows strong. Still more does the Sabbath do for the heart of the working man. From early morning, when his children are yet asleep, till night, when they and he are alike weary, and wish to sleep again, he is away from his home; but on the Sabbath-day they are for him and he for them. Father, mother, brothers, sisters, have leisure then to rejoice in each other's society. They eat, sit, walk, read, and worship together; and to affectionate hearts this one day must bring more domestic happiness than all the rest. Above all, the working man, having a soul to educate for eternity, needs to be enlightened in truth and duty—to be elevated, sanctified, and saved. He has to adore his Maker; to study the work of redemption; to become acquainted

with the Word of God; to praise Him for His mercies; to pray for His help; to prepare for heaven. At the printing-press or the loom, at the furnace or the anvil, at the hedge or the furrow, associated with other workmen, he has few facilities for these highest employments of his life; but on the Sabbath he is free. The best hours of the day may be consecrated to the service of God; he may provide for his soul; he may triumph in the consciousness of immortality.

3. These uses of the Sabbath to Christians of all classes, and to the working classes in particular, may show how important it is to society at large. "The Sabbath was made for man." God has sanctified it for the welfare of the whole world. On that day more persons, probably, are converted to God than on all the other days together. If any man becomes anxious about his salvation, he uniformly longs for its return as the time when he can most successfully seek his spiritual welfare. Numbers, too, who are not earnest and thoughtful, but who attend public worship because it is fashionable so to do, must, under all circumstances, learn much of the Word of God, and contract some respect for His authority, who otherwise would scarcely recollect His existence. And further, since the Church is the salt and the light of the world (Matt. v. 13, 14), and since the Sabbath alone releases many of the

disciples of Christ from secular toils to employ a portion of their energies in the instruction of the ignorant, it is impossible to say how much of the religious knowledge and principle existing at this moment in the nation is instrumentally owing to the institution of that sacred rest.

II. Those, therefore, who know the value of the Sabbath, ought, in the exercise of common humanity no less than of religious zeal, to call the attention of the public to its claims. Such, especially, as are opposed to legislative acts for its support, and such as, without opposing them, expect very little from their influence, ought to establish, as far as they can, a universal respect for it by argument and information. Appeals to the Scripture are all the more urgently needed, if appeals to the Legislature are renounced. If Government is not to protect the Sabbath, conscience must. If there are to be no penalties, there must be the more knowledge. Most usefully, therefore, from time to time, may books adapted to the circumstances of the day, inspired by earnest benevolence, and armed with strong sense, issue forth to warn the inconsiderate of the mischief which they do to themselves and to society, by neglecting to consecrate to God and to the care of their soul the day which He has claimed for himself and for it. Combined efforts carry more weight than those which are made by individuals. Accord-

ingly, a series of good tracts upon this subject is probably better than a single good book; because the best thoughts of many are likely to be more varied and more forcible than the best thoughts of one.

Various circumstances call for these combined appeals to the conscience and good sense of men. Crowded railroads and thronged steamboats proclaim on each returning Sabbath that a large population, pent up and overwrought during the week at the loom and the ledger, are not only eager for air and sunshine, for gaiety and recreation, but also that they will have these things even at the price of despising the commands of God. Christians, then, must no less loudly proclaim, that sunshine and recreation, however excellent, are purchased too dearly when they are sought in exchange for the blessings of the Sabbath. The working population ought to have them and the Sabbath too. And as inconsiderate philanthropists are persuading numbers that a jovial jaunt is better than a visit to the house of prayer, and that the Sabbath is best spent when it is devoted to innocent recreation, Christian philanthropists ought to tell them that pleasure and prosperity follow duty, and that the healthiest, happiest, and most thriving families of the land are not to be found generally among those who trample under foot God's Sabbath law, but among those who most conscientiously respect its sacredness.

This has been done in the following volume, to which various writers have contributed who need no introduction to the reader's esteem and attention. One generous and patriotic disciple of Christ, who had warmly approved of the design, entered on his eternal Sabbath before he could exhort his countrymen, as he wished, to hold fast the blessings of the earthly one. But the place assigned to Dr. Chalmers in this volume has been so well occupied by another, as to make us feel, that when the course of nature withdraws from us the veteran advocates of truth, God can raise up others to enter on their toils.

Since the removal of Dr. Chalmers, Edward Bickersteth also, who was no less worthy of respect and affection for his many Christian virtues, has died in faith and peace. He lived to fulfil his task as one of the writers of this volume: and his Essay will be read with the greatest interest, as nearly the last contribution of his warm heart to the cause of God and truth.

Reader, will you permit me to address your conscience in this matter? If you love the Sabbath, because you have experienced that its devout and dutiful employment has brought you many blessings, will you aid your Christian brethren to diffuse the knowledge of its claims through the land; that as the nation recedes from all State interference to enforce religious duties, it fulfils those duties more zealously

from respect to the authority of God, and from a regard to its own highest interests?

But if, unhappily, you are one of those who, themselves disregarding the Sabbath, lead others likewise to violate it, allow me to beg you to consider thoughtfully the arguments contained in this volume, and then put to yourself some such questions as the following:—

Since the Sabbath is so great a comfort to the working classes, am I acting kindly to them when I endeavour by my example to destroy its authority?

Since a spiritual and holy rest on earth is intolerable to me, am I prepared for a spiritual and holy rest in heaven?

Since, in addition to the six days of the week which are allotted to secular business, I give to it also the seventh day, which God has allotted to the care of the soul, am I making a provision for the soul by any other method whatever?

Since I am neglecting this prescribed means of spiritual improvement, am I not likewise neglecting all other means for the same end?

Does not my want of reverence for the will of God in this particular, manifest that I have no reverence for it in any of the habits of my life?

And does not the revelation of my whole character, made by the breach of this one law, furnish evidence that my sins are unforgiven, and afford a presage of a fatal reckoning, when I

shall meet with my slighted Redeemer at the judgment-seat?

The neglect of the Sabbath may occasion us bitter regret on some future occasion, but if we employ it well, we shall have our share in the blessing attached to it; for God has said, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord."

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

I.

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY AND PERMANENT OBLIGATION OF THE SABBATH.

BY REV. RALPH WARDLAW, D.D.,
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE object of this Essay is—to give a concise summary of the argument in support of the EARLY ORIGIN, and the UNIVERSAL AND PERMANENT OBLIGATION, of THE SABBATH; and of the CHANGE FROM THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE WEEK TO THE FIRST UNDER THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION. Extended and controversial discussion is out of the question. If the following brief statement, consisting principally of an abridgment of a portion of a larger work,* shall, by the blessing of God, have any effect in diffusing just conceptions respecting the day of sacred rest, and right impressions of its importance, the writer will feel himself more than amply compensated for the little time and trouble it has cost him to prepare it.

I. EARLY ORIGIN.—It is a matter of fact, disputed by none, that the seventh-day Sabbath was observed by the Jewish people under the ancient economy; and by none who believe that economy

* "Discourses on the Sabbath." Fullarton and Co., 1832. Now for a good many years out of print.

to have been Divine is it doubted, that amongst them it was not a self-authorised celebration, but an institute of Jehovah. One great question, therefore, is—Was it peculiar to that people? or was it, in its origin and obligation, common to mankind? Did the observance commence with the Divine legation of Moses, or did it commence immediately after the creation of the world? This is a question of fact. The conclusions from it will appear afterwards. It is the opinion of some writers, more recent and more ancient, that the seventh day was *not* set apart for sacred observance at the time of the creation; that there was no such Divine institute till the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, two thousand five hundred years afterwards; and that the historian, himself an Israelite, in giving the inspired account of the creation, takes notice of the Sabbath incidentally only, and by anticipation: that account with which the institution was, at the future period, associated, having naturally suggested it to his mind!

Let us look, then, at that account (Gen. ii. 1-3): "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that on it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

There is no dispute here about the meaning of "blessing" and "sanctifying" the day. It is admitted to signify the setting of it apart for religious observance. The question is—Do the words record the setting apart of the day *at that time*, or do they refer prospectively, to its being set apart *thousands of years afterwards?* And can any reader, without a theory to support, hesitate about the answer? The case seems one that should not require an argument. But since the latter opinion has been held, let the

following considerations be weighed in support of the former :—

1. The *plain language of the passage.*—It is the language of history. And what the historian relates about the seventh day, he relates as done *at the time*, with the very same simplicity with which he relates the associated transactions of creation as done at the time. There is no hint, no change of construction, nothing whatsoever in the slightest degree indicative of its being a mere allusion to something that took place at a future and distant age.

2. The *nature of the thing.*—Were there in this anything that *required* the language to be understood as an allusion to the future rather than a narrative of the present, we might feel ourselves under the necessity of putting a constraint upon its more obvious import. Is it so, then ? The very reverse. The nature of the thing is all in favour of the simplest interpretation. If, as is admitted, the Sabbath was a *commemoration of God's work of creation,* then why should not the commemoration commence from the time the work to be commemorated was completed ? Was it not thus with the passover ? Was it not thus with the Lord's Supper ? And why not thus, then, with the Sabbath ?

3. *Our Lord's words: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."*—The words will come afterwards to be used in evidence on another branch of the subject. At present, we quote them as plainly implying that the time when *man* was made, was the time when *the Sabbath* was made. The words lead our minds irresistibly to the time of creation. The Sabbath was not first made, and then man made to observe it; but man was first made, and the Sabbath was made to be observed by him, and for his benefit: and it is evidently implied, that it was made for him at the time when he was made himself.

4. *The Apostle's argument in* Heb. iv. 3-8.—In

these verses, he distinguishes the "*rest*" *of Canaan* from the previous *Sabbatical rest.* And there is no making anything of his argument, except on the assumption of the latter having been entered into *from the beginning.* In quoting God's words, "I sware in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest," and marking the distinction between this rest and the other, he does not say, "Although the rest of the seventh day *had been instituted in the wilderness for the observance of his chosen people,*" but, "*although the works were finished from the creation of the world*"—intimating most clearly, both in language and argument, that *that* rest had been "entered into" when "the works were finished"—that is, from the time of the creation of the world.

5. The *division of time into weeks.*—This division is found to have existed among all nations, from th; earliest periods to which history and tradition reach together with hints of the sacredness of the seventh day, and traces of the practice of its observance. It is difficult, if not impossible, to trace this hebdomadal division of time to any other origin—there being nothing in nature that leads to it. And, if this division of time had the origin thus assigned to it, the *reason* of it must have been originally known—namely, the fact of the Creator's having made the world in six days, and rested on the seventh.

6. *The very terms in which the Sabbath is introduced by the historian of the Exodus.*—Had that language been, in its natural and palpable meaning, the language of primary and legal institution, we might have been obliged to yield up the preceding considerations, conclusive as they seem. But so far is this from being the case, that we are not satisfied with saying the language *may* be understood consistently with the view we have been giving; we go further, and affirm that it *cannot be understood otherwise.* We cannot here transcribe the whole of the sixteenth chapter of the Book of Exodus—which

contains the account of the manna, and in which the first mention of the Sabbath in the history of Israel is found; but let any man of ordinary common sense and candour (we ask no higher qualifications) peruse that chapter, and say whether he can imagine the manner in which the Sabbath is introduced to be that in which an important religious observance, entirely new, quite unknown before, would have been formally and legally instituted! While the entire general style necessitates an opposite conclusion, there are *two points* to which special attention may be requested. The *first* is the fact, that when God in addressing Moses enjoins the gathering and preparing by the people of a double portion of the manna on the sixth day, he does it *without assigning any reason:* "And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."—(Verse 5.) On the supposition of no sabbatical rest having previously existed, and no distinction between the day of that rest and of other days of the week, this omission of any reason is very unaccountable; whereas, on the contrary supposition, all is perfectly natural, and just as we might have expected it to be. The *second* is the further fact, that when the sixth day came, the people actually did "gather twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and when they did it, *all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.*"—(Verse 22.) Now, what was it that the rulers reported? One or other of two things. Either they told the fact of this double gathering on the sixth day, as a thing which they themselves had not anticipated, and which they apprehended might be a violation of the order respecting the quantity to be collected daily; or they reported it as an act of obedience on the part of the people to a previous intimation, informing Moses that they had done as had been commanded. On the former of these supposi-

tions, it will follow that the course pursued by the people on the sixth day was pursued by them *of their own accord*, anticipating the rest of the seventh. On the latter it follows, that Moses had made known to the rulers and people the intimation which Jehovah had made to himself; but on either supposition the inference deducible is clear. If Moses had *not* made known the intimation, and the people gathered their double portion on the sixth day *of their own accord*, then the rest of the seventh day was known and familiar *to them*. If, on the contrary, the intimation *had been* made known, and the people acted in conformity to it, still the terms in which the intimation had been given to Moses himself imply, with equal clearness, that the Sabbath of the seventh day was known and familiar *to him*. From the manner in which the report is brought by the rulers to Moses, and the manner in which Moses answers them, the former supposition is by much the more likely. Their manner is far liker that of uncertainty and a desire of information, than that of a mere matter-of-fact report of conformity to orders; and with this the reply of Moses corresponds, affirming the propriety of the people's conduct, and adding fuller and more explicit directions.

When the two passages, Gen. ii. 1-3, and Exod. xvi., are taken together, our argument receives great additional strength. It cannot be and never has been questioned that the former, taken in its simple and natural meaning as a part of the narrative, *at once assigns the reason* of the Sabbath's sanctification, and *dates its commencement;* and it is not less apparent on the very face of the narrative, that the latter *assumes the previous sanctification of the day* as a thing well known. Thus all is easy, harmonious, and consistent; and not the slightest constraint is put upon either passage to make it tally with the other; whereas, to interpret the former as not a statement of present fact (as every reader understands it), but only

an allusion to a fact twenty-five centuries posterior in date, and to interpret the latter as at all the style of legislative enactment, or the first introduction of an unknown ordinance, both require a straining such as nothing short of absolute necessity can ever justify. And we need not say that no such necessity exists here save the necessity of a theory.

7. *The terms of the fourth commandment.*—(Exod. xx. 8-11.)—We may assume that these terms are familiar to our readers. It will surely not be questioned that the words, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," are words which pre-suppose its existence. Now we have seen that the terms of the former passage—"To morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord"—are terms which, on no natural principle, can be explained as the first enactment of the sabbatic rest; but that they assume its pre-existence as well as those before us. To what previous period of institution, then, can the fourth commandment refer? What other is there or can there be but the period of the creation? And "the reason annexed" to this commandment, accordingly, carries us back at once to that time and to that event: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." This should be enough—but it is not all. It is clear as day, that in the terms of this "reason annexed" there is a reference to *the terms of the history.* The one is a quotation of the other. Moses had himself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recorded the early fact; and while, in the words of the commandment, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," he assumes its pre-existence, by citing the terms in which he had himself recorded its origin, he shows at once its high antiquity and its primary design. The words in Genesis may be justly called "*the words of institution.*" They are there, and there alone.

There are no such words of institution in Exodus xvi.; and in Exodus xx. they are *not* words of institution; for even the miracle of the manna, when the Sabbath is by our opponents supposed to have commenced, preceded the giving of the law; they are only a *quotation* of the words of institution. So that, unless the Sabbath was instituted at the time when these words were used, *there is no formal institution of it anywhere to be found.*

That little or no notice of the Sabbath is to be found in the inspired account of the antediluvian and patriarchal age, may be at once admitted to be singular; but that no conclusion can be drawn from a consideration purely *negative* against one which rests on grounds so palpable and positive, may be further shown—*first*, from the circumstance of *weeks* being, throughout the entire preceding history, a recognised division of time, corresponding, of course, to the *creation week*, from which the division had its origin, and which consisted of *six days of work* and *one of rest*; so that every mention of weeks includes mention of the Sabbath; and, *secondly*, from the fact of there being no mention of the Sabbath in the *subsequent* historical books of Scripture (those of Joshua and Judges) for a period of at least four hundred years after its admitted institution in the wilderness, and of the extremely rare and incidental notice of it for even a greater number of centuries posterior to the close of the Book of Judges; and from the further parallel facts, of there being no mention, for a period of 1,500 years—from the birth of Seth till the flood—of *sacrifice*; and for a similar period of 1,500 years—from the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan till the birth of Christ—of *circumcision* as an existing rite, unless in an occasional and figurative use of the word by the historians and prophets. In no one of the cases is such silence conclusive. No person imagines from it that, during these two latter long periods, there was no such observance as

sacrifice or circumcision. And in the case of the Sabbath, moreover, the objection from the silence before is completely neutralised by the silence after.

But is not God said to have "*made known* to Israel his holy Sabbath?"—(Nehem. ix. 14.) He is. But does it follow from this that the Sabbath was unknown and unobserved before? Without insisting on the phrase "*making known*" rather implying the existence already of the thing made known than expressing its commencement, we may reply—So is God said to have "*made known* his *ways* to Moses, and his *acts* unto the children of Israel;" from which, surely, it does not follow that none of them had ever been "made known" before; far less that they did not exist before!—The Sabbath, too, it is alleged, is said to have been "*given*" to Israel.—(Ezek. xx. 10-12.) "What else," it has been said, "can this mean, than its being *first instituted* in the wilderness?" The answer is—*first*, that the same word is, in the same passage, as well as in Nehem. ix., applied to God's *statutes*, and *judgments*, and *precepts*, and *laws*, *generally*, as well as to His Sabbaths. Is it to be inferred from this, that there were no Divine laws "given" to men prior to the time of the Exodus? Not so thought and taught the Apostle Paul. He argues with the Jews, that there was a law anterior to theirs, binding on *mankind*, Jews and Gentiles alike, from the simple fact that "death" —the penalty of sin—"reigned" over all men "from Adam to Moses;" the penalty of sin implying the existence of sin, and the existence of sin the existence of law; seeing "sin is not imputed where there is no law."—(Rom. v. 13, 14.) And *secondly*, that by our Lord himself the word "*given*" is expressly used respecting another rite, when it does not mean, and by himself is explained as not meaning, *original institution*.—(John vii. 27.) "Moses, therefore, *gave* unto you circumcision—(not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers);"—its having been *given* by Moses, then,

does not signify its having been "*first instituted*" by Moses. Previously existing institutes and laws might, with all truth, be represented as "made known," and as "given," to a particular people, when, in a systematic and embodied form, with special solemnity, and with peculiar sanctions, they were delivered from heaven to that people; and when the possession of them in that form became the distinction of that people from others. And on this ground, too, we find a satisfactory answer to another objection—namely, that the Sabbath, in different passages, is spoken of as given to be "*a sign* between Jehovah and the people of Israel;" which, it is alleged, implies its having been, and having been designed to be, peculiar to that people. Now, the same thing is true of the whole law—not the ceremonial code merely, nor even especially, but the moral—"Thou shalt bind them *for a sign* upon thine hand." Were the precepts of the moral law exclusively Jewish? The plain truth is, that whatever formed a distinction between the Israelites and other nations was a sign. Such a sign were the giving of the law, and the possession of it. All his institutions, too, and the Sabbath among the rest, were *a sign* between God and Israel, as forming a test, at once of *their obedience to him*, and of *His faithfulness to them*. And it is remarkable, that even when the Sabbath is spoken of as a sign, the reason assigned for its observance is not at all a reason peculiarly Jewish, but simply the great original reason of the institution:—"The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant: it is *a sign* between me and the children of Israel for ever; *for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.*"—(Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.)

So much for the Sabbath's EARLY ORIGIN.

II. UNIVERSAL AND PERMANENT OBLIGATION.—If

we have been successful in establishing our former position, we need not to dwell long on proofs of either the universality or the permanence of the obligation. By the very authority of those who deny the early origin, the successful demonstration of such an origin is admitted to be valid and conclusive evidence of both. "If the Divine command," says Dr. Paley, "was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed no doubt to the whole human species alike; and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it." The establishment of this, he grants, "precludes all debate about the extent of the obligation." Here, then, we might leave our case. We strengthen our position, however, by sundry additional considerations. As—

1. *The obvious universality of the design of the Sabbath.*—It is the commemorative celebration of the creation of the world, and of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the great Creator. Can anything whatever be more comprehensive? To what people, or nation, or kindred, or tongue, does such celebration specially pertain, more than to another? Surely, if there be aught that belongs to the entire race, it is this. The duty is universal; the reason of it is universal. Creation is a common theme; the Creator a common object of adoration.

2. *Its manifestly moral character.*—Look *first* at the *thing itself.* What is it? Apart altogether from the moral principle involved in mercy to the brute creation, and to the physically "labouring and heavy laden" of our own species—it is the setting apart of a portion of time for the worship of God, and the cultivation and expression of the principles and affections of piety. Can there be anything more directly moral than this? We refer not to the precise portion of time to be so devoted. This we can suppose to have been different, without any change in the moral character of the command;—

although, if there be anything in the specified proportion adapted to the physical constitutions of man and brute, and to the most efficient preservation of their physical energies—as well as discerned by infinite wisdom to be the best fitted, in connexion with these, for the spiritual ends of the day—there may even in the *seventh*, rather than the *sixth* or the *tenth* part of time, be a corresponding amount of moral obligation. But at all events, the worship of God, and the cultivation toward Him of the principles of godliness, are decidedly moral duties, and that of the highest order. And these are the primary and most imperative duties of the Sabbath. Look *next* at *the position the precept holds in the decalogue*. It is one of ten, of which all the rest are beyond controversy moral. This surely is a proof which, though it may be called presumptive only, is strong, that it, too, is of the same description. How came it there? In the first commandment we have the *exclusiveness* of God's worship in the second, the *spirituality* of His worship; in the third, its *devout and reverential character*, as well as the veneration of all that is Divine; and in the fourth, *the appropriation to it of a certain fixed and regularly returning proportion of time*, as the guarantee that in the midst of secular engagements it shall not be overlooked and set aside. All this is moral—clearly and Divinely moral. And as such, it is neither Jewish nor Gentile, but belongs to mankind; and it is, of course, *permanent* as well as *universal*.

3. *Our Lord's representation of it as* "MADE FOR MAN:" "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—We have before referred to the words, as containing proof that the making of man and the making of the Sabbath were coincident in point of time—that when man was made, the Sabbath was made for him. It seems impossible that in the words, "MAN" can be understood otherwise than *generically*. Where does either our

Lord, or any of the inspired penmen, use such terms in reference to any institution merely Jewish? In regard to the Sabbath, as in regard to the Gospel, we might apply the question—"Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles?" And when Jesus inferentially subjoins to this statement—"Wherefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath,"—his meaning appears to be, not that, the institution being Jewish and temporary, he had authority to set it aside with other ceremonial observances—seeing it is not as an institution for Israel but for MAN that he speaks of it; but rather, that the Sabbath having been instituted in subserviency to the great moral ends of man's being—and his own mission, and "work given him to do" as "the Son of Man," being, above all the other plans and doings of Jehovah intended to promote those ends, he had full authority, as the commissioned King of Zion, to introduce any such changes in the observance as might coincide with the special nature of his kingdom, and as might thus render it the more effective for the accomplishment of the moral purposes of God, with respect to man, in its institution. Such, for example, was the coming *change of the day*.

4. *The untenableness of the objections* on this part of our subject.—It is objected, that if we are bound by the *law of observance*, we must be bound also by the *law of penalty* for its infraction. The obvious answer is, that under the Jewish dispensation other moral delinquencies—*idolatry*, for example, and *adultery*, and *blasphemy*, and *stubborn filial disobedience*—were punishable with death as well as Sabbath breaking. Must we, then, conclude, that we are either under obligation so to punish these delinquencies, or under no obligation to keep the precepts of which they are violations? If the conclusion is fair as to the Sabbath, it must be fair in these other cases too. This, we are aware, is evaded. We *are* bound, it is said, by the moral precepts; but it is not *as part of*

the law of Moses—it is not *as given to the Jews.* I have called this an evasion. And such it is. It is, first of all, a very plain *truism*, that no man can be bound by a law *as given to another than himself;* and it is as harmless as it is plain. But when God made known Divine truths and moral duties to His ancient people, it was not truths and duties that belonged only to themselves and in which the rest of mankind had no concern. His design was to rescue from oblivion what was in danger, through the corruption of human nature, of being universally forgotten, and to prepare for its still fuller disclosure and more general diffusion at a future period. Now, would there not be just about as much wisdom in a man's saying of the *truths* made known to the Jews—"These are, no doubt, important and valuable truths; but it is not *as made known to the Jews* that we are bound to believe them"—as there is in his saying respecting the inculcated precepts—"These, no doubt, are important moral statutes; but it is not *as given to the Jews* that we are bound to obey them?" The plain state of the case is, that the discoveries of his *character* and of his *will* made to the Israelites were not discoveries of new truths and new duties peculiar to themselves, but of what had been truths and duties from the beginning, and would continue truths and duties to the end. There is no inconsistency in holding ourselves bound by the moral precept, although not bound by the particular penalty annexed to the violation of it, in regarding the former as of universal obligation, and the latter as peculiarly Jewish. The laws respecting penalties arose out of that exclusively Jewish system of government—the *Theocracy;* and no other people can be bound to conformity to the penal sanctions adhibited to the violation of moral precepts under that system, unless it can make out for itself the existence of a similar relation to God. But this does not at all affect the universality of the obligation of the commands of the moral law.

It is further objected, that if we are bound by the law of the Sabbath, we are bound to the observance of *the same day*—the ancient *seventh day*. This at once leads us to—

III. THE CHANGE OF THE DAY FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE FIRST, UNDER THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.—It does not require to be proved that a change of the day, for any special and Divinely-assigned reason, makes no alteration in the moral character and obligation of the institution. That such a change was made by Divine authority—by the authority of Him who is "Lord even of the Sabbath-day"—at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, is what we affirm; and that the change was from the seventh day of the week to the first. We argue this on the ground—1. OF ITS OWN REASONABLENESS; 2. OF RECORDED FACTS AND EXAMPLES; and, 3. OF DIRECT INSPIRED AUTHORITY.

1. ITS OWN REASONABLENESS.—We mean by this its *à priori* likelihood. There would, of course, be nothing conclusive in this, were it unsupported by more direct evidence. But it is a consideration which may prepare our minds for that evidence, by showing on what side the probability lay. Our theory of the matter is this:—At the original institution of the Sabbath, one special reason is assigned for its celebration: "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the Sabbath-day, and sanctified it; BECAUSE THAT in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—(Gen. ii. 2, 3.) The Sabbath was thus, originally, an instituted commemoration of the great work of creation—a day to keep men in mind of the origin and of the Divine Originator of all things, of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the all-glorious Creator, and of the duty of fearing, loving, worshipping, and serving Him. This was the grand primary reason of

the institution, and by no change has this reason ever been superseded. But when the law of the Sabbath was long after enjoined upon the Jews, while this original reason was assigned for it as retaining all its force, an additional reason, arising out of their own circumstances, and the special kindness of Jehovah towards them, supervenes upon the former—is not substituted for it, but associated with it (Deut. v. 12-15): "Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord hath commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day.*" That the latter reason is not a substituted but an added one, is manifest from the fact that when the commandment was announced, along with the rest, by the voice of Jehovah from Sinai, *the original reason alone is mentioned.*

It is thus proved that though the primary reason could not be annulled, others might be added to it. If a second might, so might a third. Let the supposition, then, be made that at "the fulness of the time," the completion of the Saviour's redeeming work had been assigned as a new reason for the celebration of the Sabbath, and that the day had at the same time been retained. Had this been done, we should have been in precisely the same circumstances (only with the important exception of the immense superiority of our additional reason to theirs) with the ancient Israelites, when their deliverance

from Egypt was superinduced upon the original reason of the Sabbatic celebration. But mark the difference. The transcendant excellence and glory of the work of redemption, and the surpassing preciousness of its blessings, will not admit of its having the place of a mere *additional* reason for the keeping of the day. It must become the *chief*. It must have the first place. It must take precedence even of creation. First in the Divine estimate of greatness, it must be first in man's grateful and reverential commemoration. How, then, shall this priority be marked? How shall the superior importance of redemption be recognised and testified in the celebration? Why, in order to give it the lead, *the day shall be changed*. Creation had the day before; redemption shall have it now. Not in either case exclusively; for as from the time of the first promise God was worshipped as *Redeemer* as well as *Creator*, so from the time of the fulfilment of the promise by the finished work of Christ, He continues to be worshipped as *Creator* as well as *Redeemer*. But His glory as seen "in the face of Jesus"—in the wonders of that work of salvation "into which angels desire to look"—surpassing His glory as seen in the external universe, and the benefit to man from the one so prodigiously exceeding that arising to Him from the provisions of the other; He is specially owned and adored, on the Christian Sabbath, in the character of "THE GOD OF OUR SALVATION." Now, such an arrangement recommends itself to our minds as reasonable and right. From the pre-eminent place which REDEMPTION holds in the revelation of God, being its grand discovery, and the pervading theme of its celebration, it is no more than we might have been prepared to expect. That the fact was in correspondence with the previous probability may appear from—

2. RECORDED FACTS AND EXAMPLES.—It is assumed that such facts and examples, if found recorded in the New Testament as having had place under the

eye and with the sanction of apostles, *are equivalent to preceptive injunctions*. What the apostles did, and what the churches did under their supervision, must have been done in accordance with their Divine Master's will. Notice then—

(1.) Acts xx. 6, 7.—"And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

The inference from this passage is clear—we wish not to press it further than it will bear—that Paul waited at Troas for an opportunity of meeting with the assembled church; that the day on which he enjoyed this opportunity was not the seventh or last day of the week, in the beginning of which he had arrived, but the first of the following week. The conclusion is, that the Christian brethren were not accustomed to meet on the day of the ancient and Jewish Sabbath, and that they were accustomed to meet on a day of their own; that *as their day of public worship* they solemnised not the *seventh* day but the *first*.

(2.) 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.—"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The same inference follows, beyond contradiction, from this passage, that the first day of the week was the day of their regular public assemblies for the worship of God. On that day they were to lay apart a portion of their gains, such as their prosperity might enable them to afford, "putting it into the treasury" (that is, of the Church), so that when the apostle came there might be no need of collections; that all might be ready to

his hand. But while this inference is indisputable, there is another and a further one from this passage, which is not less valid. We have here very evidently *the original week with a change in the day of rest.* We have *a period of secular business,* during which it is supposed they may have experienced various degrees of prosperity in their respective callings; and we have *a day* on which a proportion of the proceeds of such business was to be set apart, and put into the Church's treasury for a benevolent purpose. Is not this just the ancient arrangement, only with the change specified—six days' work and one day's rest? Are not the apostle's words of much the same import as if he had said—*Upon the day of rest* put your contributions into the treasury, conscientiously proportioning them to the measure of your success *during the days of labour?* We have more, then, in this passage, than the mere fact of the first day of the week having been the day on which the churches met for worship—we have the further fact established, we do not say with absolute certainty, but with a probability akin to certainty, that that day had now become *the* day of *cessation from the secular engagements of the other six;* the original week—God's instituted week—being not merely a period of seven days, but a period of *six days of labour* and *one of rest* —sacred, religious rest.

(3.) Rev. i. 10.—"I was in the Spirit ON the LORD'S-DAY."—It is assumed that this was a *natural day;* and that it was the *first day of the week.* None will dispute this who are worthy to be reasoned with. Such was the designation, then, which that day had acquired among Christians at that early period. And what designation could be more appropiate for the day on which, after having been "delivered for our offences," He was "raised again for our justification?"—the day which sealed the Divine acceptance of His finished work, and was the prelude to His final and universal triumph? The

day is HIS—sacred to Him, and to the exercise of thankful commemorative adoration for the redemption effected by His death and certified by His resurrection. And with this passage we cannot but connect those recorded appearances of His to His disciples after His rising from the dead—in which He, in a manner, practically claimed it as His own, and set the example of its hallowed appropriation. He appeared to them in the evening of the day of His rising. He permitted Thomas to remain for a week in his incredulity, and on the next first day of the week presented himself again—satisfied his doubts, and received his adoring homage. His first two appearances seem thus to have been designed to mark out the day as henceforth the appropriate commemorative day for the people of God—commemorative of His own work, the work of redeeming love. And after His ascension, the glorious day of the Spirit's effusion—the blessed day of the commencement of His reign—the pentecostal day—was also "the first day of the week." And to complete this department of our plea, it ought to be observed what a correspondence there is between the "*Lord's-day*" as the designation of the Christian Sabbath, and "*the Sabbath of the Lord*," as one of the designations of the seventh day from the beginning. "*My Sabbath*," it was called by Jehovah. Does not the one thus stand for the other?

3. DIRECT INSPIRED AUTHORITY.—We hesitate not in at once referring, for such authority, to Heb. iv. 9, 10: "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God: for he that entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Before directly stating the argument from this passage, which to us appears clear and decisive, there are two remarks as to its phraseology which require the reader's attention.—1. The word which in the former of these verses is translated rest—"there remaineth *a rest* for the people of God"—is not (as an

English reader cannot but suppose it to be) the same with that which is so rendered throughout the chapter. The English reader who has a Bible with marginal annotations, will see that on the margin it is rendered "*a Sabbatism*, or *the keeping of a Sabbath*." It is in this verse alone that this particular word is used. In all the other occurrences of the English word "rest," the Greek word is different;—in verses 1st, 3rd, 5th, 8th, 10th, and 11th. The word in verse 9th, is a noun of regular formation from the verb, which, in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, is used for *keeping a Sabbath*. We are satisfied that there is more under this change of the term than can be accounted for on any mere principle of taste in composition, or the desire to represent the rest of heaven under the figure of an eternal Sabbath. How just and pleasing soever such a figure may be, a sound reasoner would beware, without some better cause, of introducing into his conclusion a different term, and one capable of a different meaning, from that which he had used in his premises. We believe the ninth verse to be *an inference* from what he had established in the six preceding verses; while, at the same time, the inference was what he had it principally in his view to bring out from the argument contained in those verses—an argument of apparent intricacy, though real simplicity, into which it is impossible here to enter. He is writing to Hebrews; and reasonably might it be expected, that amongst the variety of topics to which he adverts, connected with ancient observances and the changes under the new economy, *the Sabbath* should not be without notice. Here, as we believe, the notice is. He vindicates the observance of a new Sabbath-day, under that economy, by "the people of God"—the New Testament Israel. The *ground* of vindication we shall see presently.—2. The other observation relates to the word "remaineth,"—"There *remaineth*, therefore,

a Sabbatism to the people of God." That the word may naturally refer to what is "reserved in heaven for them"—as remaining to be obtained and enjoyed by them all in succession—is not denied. It is enough for our purpose that it is capable, with equal propriety, of referring to what was in reserve for God's people under the new spiritual economy, called by him "the time of reformation." Of the Old Testament saints he says—"These all, having received a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect."—(Heb. xi. 39, 40.) "When the fulness of the time came," the "promise" was "received," —the "better things," before "provided," were obtained. And in commemoration of the glorious accomplishment of the promise, and the finishing of the work of redemption, there "remained" this new "Sabbatical rest" to "the people of God." The word is used in a sense similar to that in which he applies it, negatively, to the subject of *sacrifice:* "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, *there remaineth* no more sacrifice for sins." The "one offering" of Christ has finished and set aside the entire sacrificial system. But on the contrary there did "remain" a special "Sabbath-keeping," adapted to the commemoration of this one offering, and of the completion by it of the great work of redemption. The sacrifices, though not exclusively Jewish, yet being typical and ceremonial, were set aside as having answered their end; but the Sabbath being in its character moral, and having ends to serve that were as important under the last as under previous dispensations, "remained." But it remained as *a new day*, and with *a new and special subject of celebration.*

We have before taken notice of the reasonableness of the appropriation of a new day to the celebration of the most glorious of Divine transactions. And

having thus cleared our way, let the reader, divesting himself of all prepossessions in behalf of the common interpretation, which has on its side all the force of habit, and all the influence of pious and delightful associations, candidly observe—

(1.) The beautiful and striking analogy between the reason assigned for this new Sabbatic-day, and that originally assigned for the old: "There remaineth, therefore, a Sabbatism to the people of God; FOR he that is entered into his rest, he also HATH CEASED FROM HIS OWN WORKS, AS GOD DID FROM HIS." Just suppose CHRIST to be meant by "*He that is entered into his rest*," and the analogy is perfect and forcible. The very reading of the words renders the conclusion so simple as to be irresistible. As when God ceased from his work of creation, the day of his resting was hallowed as a Sabbatism, or a day of commemorative rest and religious celebration; so, when Jesus finished *His* work, the work of redemption, and rested from it in His resurrection and His reception to the right hand of God, that blessed day was in all time coming to be the day of Sabbatical rest and celebration. In the ordinary interpretation, the spirit of this allusion to the work of creation and the first Sabbath, and of the analogy suggested by it, is entirely lost. There is not a vestige of it left. But, interpreted as above, so completely is it preserved, that the language of God in Gen. ii. 1-3, might in the full spirit of it be accommodated to the work of Jesus when He rose from the dead, and the consequent sanctification of the first day of the week: "Thus the work of redemption was finished, and all its glorious ends secured. And on the first day of the week, Jesus rose from the grave, and finally rested from the work he had done; wherefore the ascended Lord blessed the FIRST DAY, and sanctified it."

(2.) The "*For*" in verse 10 is plainly designed as *assigning a reason* for what had been stated in the

verse preceding; but, according to the ordinary interpretation of the passage, it neither assigns a reason nor adduces a proof of what is there affirmed. The usually supposed affirmation is, "there remaineth a rest"—the heavenly rest—"for the people of God;" and what seems to be assigned as a reason or adduced as a proof of this is, "*for* he that is entered into his rest"—the believer, namely, who dies and goes to heaven—"he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Now, apart from the *unnaturalness* of any such analogy as that between the believer's ceasing from his works on earth and God's ceasing from the six days' work of creation—and we think we might add the *presumption* involved in it—we have to ask how the believer's ceasing from his works on his entering the heavenly rest can be a reason why that rest remaineth for him, or how it can be a proof that it does remain for him? What kind of argument is imputed to the inspired writer, when he is made to say, "There remaineth, therefore, the heavenly and everlasting rest to the people of God; for the believer who enters into that rest ceaseth from his own works, as God did from his?" Surely there is here neither reason nor proof. There is an unnatural and (to say the least of it) sufficiently bold analogy; and to the illative particle "*for*" there is left no meaning whatever; whereas, on the other view, the *analogy* between God ceasing from the work of creation, and the Son of God ceasing from the work of redemption, is beautiful and striking; and the *reason* thence arising for a new "Sabbatism to the people of God," is pertinent and satisfactory. Then—

(3.) All other considerations are in full harmony with this interpretation. The change of the word from that signifying *rest* to that which the Hebrews could hardly fail to understand as meaning *the keeping of a Sabbath*, has been already adverted to. So, too, has the reasonableness of expecting that in such

an epistle—an epistle addressed to Hebrews, and for the express purpose of showing the harmony between the old state of things and the new, and reconciling their minds the more fully to the latter—some notice should be found of the transition, in the worship of the New Testament Church, from the seventh day to the first—a notice which is nowhere in the epistle unless here. We now add, that the view which we consider the passage as giving of the first-day Sabbath, is one which *accords precisely with the fact as to its real nature and design.* For what *is* that Sabbath? Is it not exactly what our explanation of the passage intimates—a commemoration of the finished work of Jesus—of His triumphantly "ceasing from that work, and entering into His rest?" Is it not just a solemn and delightful celebration of this? a rest of the believing soul in the completed redemption? in Jehovah's perfect and eternal satisfaction in it—His "smelling a *savour of rest*" in the accepted sacrifice of His Son? Is it not a day of personal and social jubilee, of spiritual joy and praise, in memory of Him who was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification?" And did not the Spirit by the inspired Psalmist anticipate the celebration of this day, when he dictated the prophecy, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. THIS IS THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HATH MADE: WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT?"

There is one objection to the view given which naturally occurs to the English reader, but which a single word or two of explanation will be sufficient to set aside. In the verse immediately subsequent to those on which we have been commenting, the Apostle adds, "Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest." How, it is naturally enough asked, can believers be exhorted to labour to enter into the keeping of a Sabbath? Certainly they cannot. And

were the only reference of the *rest* in verse 11 to the *Sabbatism* in verse 9, this would be fatal to our interpretation. But it is not so. The objection proceeds on a misapprehension. The admonition to "labour to enter into that rest," has reference not at all to the Sabbatism in the 9th verse, but to the rest in the 10th—the rest into which "He who has ceased from his work" has entered; a rest which His people are all destined to share with Him; and of which our Sabbaths on earth, in commemoration of His work, are at once the prelibation and the pledge. We commemorate Christ's rest, and we anticipate our own.

This treatise has already exceeded intended limits; yet a large field of important and interesting discussion is left untouched. Our sole object has been to establish, on Scripture authority—the only authority on such a subject—the *early origin, the universal and permanent obligation,* and *the change under the Christian economy,* of the day of Sabbatical rest. And with one reflection we conclude. It relates to the talk of those who would set aside the Sabbath as a day of rest and religious celebration, on the ground of our being now *under a more spiritual dispensation!* Surely never was argument more self-destructive. Never were premises more fatal to the very conclusion they are brought to support. We live under a spiritual dispensation. And is the secularising of the Sabbath more befitting a spiritual dispensation than the religious observance of it?—more calculated to promote the Divine life in the soul than the dedication of it to the exercises of devotion, and attendance on the means of spiritual-mindedness? Is it a characteristic of a spiritual dispensation that *every day should be alike?* So say some. And to make the sentiment sound more spiritually, they express it by *every day's being a Sabbath.* But who does not see—whether judging theoretically or expe-

rimentally—that *every* day a Sabbath is the same as *no* day a Sabbath?—that every day *alike* is not every day alike *spiritual*, but every day alike *secular?* And is a spiritual dispensation a dispensation of release from spiritual exercises, or of their infrequency and abridgment? Is there a child of God that can feel this a privilege, or that can so far impose upon himself, and forget the deceitfulness of the heart, as to fancy that he is realising a spiritual dispensation, when he puts the Sabbath on a footing with other days, and professes to make all alike spiritual by infusing spiritual principle into secular occupation? Alas! for the delusion. Can any child of God really count it a privilege to be released from the duty of consecrating so large a portion of his time as one day in seven to the service of God, to self-examination, to abstraction from this world, and the cultivation of fellowship with the world to come? Is this indeed a part of "the liberty with which Christ makes his people free?" What conceptions must they have of Christian liberty, and of a spiritual dispensation, who fancy it a part of these that they are not bound by any stringent injunctions of outward religious observance, or times of private spiritual occupation, but that they have a larger allowance of time at their own disposal for secular and worldly pursuits? Is it really spirituality of mind that exults in such a freedom, and that looks upon others as wearing chains which Christianity entitles them to burst and throw off? Is there any one Divine institution more eminently fitted for the advancement of spirituality of mind than the day of God, when duly observed? So strong is the impression of this on our mind, both from the obvious nature of the thing, and from the general experience of the children of God—an experience put on record by many a happy and grateful heart—that it forms a powerful presumptive argument for the unlikelihood (we had almost said the impossibility) of its having, under the new economy,

been set aside. A spiritual dispensation, surely, is not a dispensation under which the means of spirituality are taken away. And when we consider the spiritual constitution of the Sabbath, and its admirable adaptation to spiritual improvement, along with the fearfully anti-spiritual tendencies of its cessation, we cannot bring ourselves to imagine that such an institution should be ranked among the worldly rites of a transitory ceremonial—the "beggarly elements" of an introductory and carnal dispensation—the burdensome observance of "a yoke of bondage!" That a Christian should be solicitous to add as much more of his time for the cultivation of the principles and affections of godliness as he can redeem from the necessary engagements of this world, we can easily understand. But that such a man—a man under the real power of heartfelt, Evangelical piety—can listen with complacency to reasonings that would rob him of a portion of his spiritual enjoyment, and abridge the instituted means of his advancement in grace, and in "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light," it is surely no very wide or unwarrantable breach of charity to doubt. A more convincing proof could not be furnished of secretly-begun spiritual declension, than the manifestation of a disposition to insinuate doubts about the obligation of the Sabbath, and to do this without any apparent concern or trembling of heart at the conclusion; nor can a clearer evidence appear in any Christian Church of a mere "name to live," or a symptom more ominous of its approaching darkness and desolation, than the prevalence of such a spirit, the rise and progress of a tendency to speculate about the abrogation, or even the curtailment, of the Sabbath of the Lord—"THE LORD'S-DAY."

II.

TRACES AND INDICATIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE SABBATH IN MANY OF THE INSTITUTIONS AND OBSERVANCES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD.

BY THE REV. JOHN JORDAN,

VICAR OF ENSTONE, OXON.

"Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers."—Job viii. 8.

I.—To rob the Decalogue of one of its brightest and most precious gems—to abase the fourth commandment from its lofty position as one of the great and immutable laws of God—and to treat the Divine statute, "Remember the Sabbath-day to sanctify it," as a mere ceremonial or ritual appointment, the observance of which has passed into desuetude with the types and shadows of the Mosaic dispensation;—this has long been the device of "the wise and prudent" in their own eyes, whose religious sensibilities, not being sufficiently spiritual to discern the true excellency of the design of the Sabbath, and its sanctifying influence wherever faithfully understood and used, have thus encouraged them to lower and dishonour God's holy day, and, by aiding the worldly and the dissolute with their false but specious arguments, have thereby "given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

The plea upon which it has been attempted to found and build up this argument, pretends that there are no primitive traces and indications of the Sabbath to be discovered in the earliest records of

mankind; that, therefore, it had no existence until it was appointed by the law of Sinai; and that, consequently, the institution thus appointed was part of the ceremonial law connected with the Jewish economy, and has terminated with it. The whole of this argumentation is prolific of error, as a few observations will serve to make clear. It will be our privilege presently to show that there are some plain indications of the Sabbath having originated in Paradise itself, and we shall thus have removed the very ground upon which the plea, or rather pretence, has been based. But, just for the sake of argument, let us suppose it to be proved that no primitive traces could be found. What then? Will the absence of any records of the observance of a law prove that the law has never been enacted? It might afford presumption of this, but no more; and presumptions of this kind are always very questionable, as we can show by offering one on this very subject exactly similar, and which is nevertheless contradicted by the record of the law of Sinai itself. From the period of the final review of his dispensation by Moses (Deut. v.), about 1451 B.C., to that of Amas the herdman of Tekoa, whom some place as late as 787 B.C., and others as early as 810 B.C., that is for a space of about 650 years, there is no reference at all to the Sabbath. But does this long silence prove, or even give colour to the presumption, that the law of Sinai was never delivered? And if it cannot do so with respect to that law, it must be with the greatest caution, indeed, that we pretend to use it with respect to the original one in Paradise, so plainly announced by Moses in the beginning of Genesis. But, in fact, the silence alleged will be found to be incapable of proof; and we trust to be able to show, in the following pages of this essay, that there are, both in sacred and profane history, some very plain indications of an institution such as that which Moses has recorded the origin of in the

time of man's innocency, while yet he was in the enjoyment of Eden.

Lest, however, it should be inferred from the kind of evidence we are about to produce, that the Divine institution of the Sabbath is deficient in positive proof of its original, we would premise that, long antecedent to the time of Moses, in the very earliest ages of the world, and at its very creation, did our Divine Maker ordain and appoint the Sabbath as a hallowed day, sanctified by himself, and to be sanctified by His creatures: "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." He who questions this original, may, with equal justice, question the truth of any of the acts recorded as having been done on the six preceding days. The act of the seventh is as much and as certain a fact as that of the first, and if the calling the world out of darkness into light is a thing credible and true, and one in the blessing of which we daily have occasion to rejoice, no less is it credible and true, that God separated the seventh day from worldly use, shed upon it the light of sanctification, and made it a day of blessing and of joy to all who will accept and use it as He has appointed.

The holy Sabbath thus instituted in the time of man's innocency, was, says our Divine Lord, "made for man;" that is, if words have meaning, made because it is necessary and profitable for man. But if necessary and profitable in man's first state, while yet free from sin in Paradise, as most assuredly it was, how much more so now that he has fallen into sin; for if it was needful to him in that his pure and holy state, and needful, no doubt, to maintain him in that state, how much more so is it now to recover him from his corrupt condition, and to aid in re-

storing him to his primeval excellency! Oh, that men were wise, that they understood these things, and could rightly discern the loving-kindness of the Lord, and His purpose of mercy in giving them the Sabbath to sanctify it! Then would they with faithfulness remember this holy day to sanctify it; then would they thereby "sanctify the Lord God in their hearts;" then would they themselves become "sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer;" then would "they be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and so receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus Christ."

Meanwhile, however, and until so glorious a consummation be obtained, it is ours to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Of the things so delivered, the sanctity of the Sabbath is one that, in our day, needs much to be contended for. Not only is practical infidelity striving for its desecration, and worldly gain endeavouring to steal this pearl of great price and appropriate it to itself, but even the reasoning pride of human intellect seeks to whet its ingenuity in this unrighteous cause; and pretending that the Sabbath was not, as Christ affirms, "made for man," but only for the times of the Mosaic dispensation, argues that it had no previous origin or existence, and in proof of this avers, that no traces of it are to be found in the earliest ages of the world, or amongst the other nations of the earth. To controvert this position, and thereby to overthrow the foundation of this false averment, is the chief object of the following pages; and we entreat our readers to observe, that the drift of the succeeding argument is to show, as shall be drawn out in the conclusion, that there is very much more evidence of this kind than is generally supposed, and quite sufficient to establish a very strong presumption that there must have been, in

the primitive ages of the world, just such an institution as Moses distinctly records the origin of.

II.—The first division of our subject must be chronological, including two periods—antediluvian and postdiluvian—the former depending wholly upon sacred history, the only source of information respecting it; the latter taking a much wider range, and embracing both sacred and profane records. Within the antediluvian period we propose to include the whole primitive age of the world, from the expulsion of Adam and Eve out of Paradise until the day in which Noah came forth from the ark, and mankind, having been narrowed within the limits of that patriarch's family, commenced, as it were, a new career on the earth.

But although this period was one of considerable length, consisting of no less than 1,656 years, according to the ordinary computation, the records of the era are exceedingly few and scanty. This fact will at once account, in a very great degree, for that silence respecting the observance of the Sabbath, which, as we have already had occasion to remark, has been attempted to be used by some as an argument to prove that the Sabbath had not a primitive origin. And yet notwithstanding this assertion, we trust to be able to exhibit some traces and indications of the observance of the Sabbath, even in the scanty records of the age that we have. The first that we meet with is the expression in Gen. iv. 3, referring to the time when Cain and Abel mutually brought their offerings to the Lord. The very fact of their coming together, and that for the purpose of worship, would of itself lead to the supposition that the time must have been a stated one, and well known and recognised by both; for otherwise we cannot conceive what could have induced the jealous Cain to unite with the pious Abel in the worship of Jehovah. Had there not been a special day set apart for worship, we should rather have expected Cain to avoid

that which Able chose, from hatred and envy of him. It is, however, plainly implied, that there was a certain known time at which they both together worshipped God. The expression denoting this is rendered, in the text of the Bible, "*in process of time* it came to pass," but, in the margin, "*at the end of days* it came to pass." Now this latter is not only preferable as a construction of the original, but it directly points to that day which was "*the end of days*," the last, that is, of the seven—the seventh day, on which God ended the work that he had made, and which he had blessed and sanctified; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. And thus we have the seventh day plainly indicated to us as that which was commonly used for the public worship of God, and was thereby hallowed and honoured in agreement with its Divine appointment.

Already, too, we find the number seven employed as a number of peculiar force and power, such as we shall have many instances of to produce hereafter. For when Cain trembled for himself because of the curse pronounced upon him, and feared that every one that found him would slay him, the Lord said to him—"Therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." Now, it might be inferred from hence, that the Lord himself originated this use of the number seven; but we incline to a different opinion. It seems more agreeable to God's dealings with man, in which he delights to show his condescension to his creature, in order to win him to himself, that He should adopt and use a phrase well known to his creature, rather than originate one for the occasion; and therefore we infer that it had an existence and use amongst men previous to its employment by the Lord, and indicates amongst them some institution or custom whence it must have been derived. And his view of the subject is confirmed by the manner in which Lamech in-

his own case, multiplies the expression, when he says, "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." We conclude, then, that here already there are hints, if not much more than hints, when we consider the extreme paucity of the records themselves, indicating just such an institution as the weekly or seventh-day Sabbath was.

But we have still more remarkable evidence than this to produce, connected with the period of the deluge. Of this occurrence, and of the circumstances connected with it, we have fuller and more detailed accounts than of any other event of the age. Compared with the rest of the history of this era, the account of the flood is remarkably precise, accurate, and extended. Here, then, if anywhere, we may expect to find traces and indications of the Sabbath; and here, as we believe and trust to be able to prove, they will be found very clear and decisive. We will endeavour to exhibit the evidence to be gleaned from the occurrences connected with the flood in as concise and plain a manner as possible. The attentive reader of the history will observe that there are a number of days mentioned with considerable care, and we will therefore first explain and connect these in a general view. In doing this it will be our object to show respecting them, first, their several positions throughout the year, as days of the year, numbered in a continuous series from 1 to 360 for the year; and then to point out, as may be easily done, the places in the weeks which such days may severally be conceived to have occupied, upon a supposition which will then be explained. In pursuing this inquiry, there is but one particular to advise the reader of, and that is, that in these early periods the months were always reckoned as containing 30 days, and the year, consequently, as being of 360 days only; and that these records of the deluge abundantly prove this. We proceed, then, to arrange the days referred to in the history accordingly.

1. In Gen. vii. 4, 10, 11, will be found two days described, the one occurring as 7 days before the 17th day of the 2nd month of the 600th year of Noah's life—the other as being this 17th day itself. Now, the former of these will be found to be the 40th day of the year, and the latter the 47th. 2. In Gen. xii. 17, it will be seen that the flood was 40 days upon the earth—that is, it rained 40 days and 40 nights, the last of which period would be the 87th day of the year. 3. In Gen. vii. 24, and viii. 4, it will be seen that the waters prevailed 150 days, and that on the 17th day of the 7th month the ark rested on Mount Ararat. These two days will be found to coincide, and to be the 197th day of the year. 4. In Gen. viii. 5, will be found a day described as the 1st day of the 10th month, which is the 271st day of the year. 5. In Gen. viii. 6-12, will be found four days described, the one as being 40 days after the mountains were seen, and as that on which the raven was sent out, and the other three as occurring each at intervals of 7 days, and those will be the 311th, 318th, 325th, and 332nd days of the year. 6. In Gen. viii. 13, will be found a day which was the 1st of the 1st month of the 601st year of Noah's life, and which, carrying on into this year the same series of numbers commenced in the preceding, would be the 361st day. 7. In Gen. viii. 14, is described the 27th day of the 2nd month, which, according to the same plan, would be the 417th day.

Having thus drawn out these various days in such a manner as to insure their exact relative position throughout the years, we can come the more easily to inquire if they can have any further positions assigned them, so as to determine what days of the week they were. And this we think can be done very satisfactorily upon one hypothesis. There are four days specially noted as occurring at regular intervals of seven days; and this fact alone might lead us to regard them as having something peculiar

about them. They are signalised, moreover, as the days on which the raven was sent out once, and the dove three times. Being thus remarkable in every way, both as seventh days and for their events, we conceive it to be in the highest degree probable that these were the regularly recognised seventh days of each week, that is, the Sabbath-days.

But this being admitted or assumed, all the other days must range in the weeks throughout the year, according to their position in it relatively to these four, and will stand thus :—The 40th, 47th, and 271st were second days of the week ; the 87th, 311th, 318th, 325th, and 332nd were seventh days; the 197th was the fifth day; and the 361st and 417th were first days.

Now the appropriateness of these days to their several occurrences will, we think, further tend to illustrate and confirm the view we take of them. Thus, for example, the 40th was the day on which Noah entered the ark, and the 47th was that on which the flood began, and both of these were second days of the week. But since it had been on the second day of the week of creation that God had divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament ; so when He reversed His decree for a time, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour down upon the earth the waters above the firmament, the second day was most suitable, as reminding the world that He who can make by His word can unmake by the same word, and that He who had originally ordered things good, was now pleased in judgment to undo His own work for a season. So again, the 271st day being that on which the tops of the mountains were seen, was appropriately a second day, as reminding Noah and his family that God would restore all things as at the first, and that the waters were being gathered once more above the firmament, and stored there to drop fatness upon the earth.

That the 87th day, being the conclusion of the forty days during which it ceased not to rain night and day, should be the seventh day, was appropriate, as denoting God's resting from His work of judgment, and affording Noah and his family opportunity for praising Him for His salvation to them; while the days on which the raven and the dove were sent forth seem peculiarly suitable as seventh days of holy worship, when the inhabitants of the ark were seeking to discover the mind of the Lord, and inquiring of His providence to direct them in their going forth.

That the 361st day, being that on which the ark was uncovered, and the 417th day being that on which Noah entered once more into possession of the earth, should be first days of the week, seems also appropriate, as denoting the commencement, as it were, of a new creation, since the earth came forth from the flood baptized of the moral defilements that had previously polluted it. Nor should it be forgotten that, since these were first days, those preceding them—that is, the day before uncovering the ark, and the day before their quitting it—must consequently have been Sabbath-days, and to have been peculiarly adapted to such remarkable occasions as preparing for the labours of them by their religious solemnities and devotions.

We think, then, we may say, in conclusion, that, with respect to these days and incidents in the account of the flood, they greatly tend to the conviction that such an institution as the Sabbath had a primitive origin; they clearly and certainly prove a division of time into weeks, and that of itself alone is a strong presumption in favour of such a conviction; and they afford unmistakable traces and indications of that Divine appointment which Moses declares was made in Paradise itself.

III.—In entering upon a review of the post-diluvian period, we are, as already intimated, to

extend our researches beyond the records of holy writ, and to seek, in profane history, such traces as we believe do plainly indicate the origin of such an institution as that of the Sabbath. In doing this, however, we must adopt an entirely new arrangement, in order to give full effect to the circumstantial evidence we are about to produce; and, in order to explain the method of this, we must remind the reader of certain facts which, though well known to him, he must nevertheless, for this purpose, regard in the light we are about to present them to him. Let it be borne in mind, then, that the whole channel of primitive history, and especially of the records of the Sabbatical institution, were by the deluge brought within the confines of the ark, were limited to the single family of Noah, and thence must have descended by the streams originating in this salient fountain of humanity, to the different families, tribes, or nations, amongst whom we propose to trace them. We must briefly state, without attempting to discuss the matter here, that mankind, having migrated from Mount Ararat, in Armenia, where Noah had come forth from the ark—where the ark itself rested, a monumental relic of God's mercy and justice, and where the first altar had been erected to his honour—followed the course of the Euphrates until they reached the plain of Shinar, and there perpetrated that great act of rebellious pride, the building of Babel, "to make them a name, lest they should be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." To punish them for such a daring act of impiety and pride, God confounded their language; and all history conspires to assure us that the three families of mankind were, from that time, separated from one another, and have thenceforth continued to disperse and spread themselves over the earth. Japheth, the elder son of Noah, appears to have led the way in this dispersion, and to have been drawn towards

Armenia, the resting-place of the ark, and locality of the primitive altar. In the same direction, and probably with the same object in view, Shem pursued the same route, and, pressing upon the rear of Japheth, compelled him to cross the Caucasus, and so to enter Europe. Shem and his posterity settled around Mount Ararat, and to the westward and eastward of it, in positions that we have not space here to explain, while Japheth, having crossed the Causasus, spread himself, according to the words of prophecy—"God shall enlarge Japheth"—far and wide over the larger portion of the globe. Ham and his posterity continued still to occupy the scene of man's rebellion, until they at length separated, and, betaking themselves to Canaan, descended into Egypt, and thence dispersed themselves throughout the torrid wilds of Africa. It is evident, then, that we thus open up three distinct main channels of tradition for any such fact as the primitive institution of the Sabbath being transmitted to future ages; and it is in these natural channels that we now propose to trace such indications of it as history may afford.

1. We purpose first to attempt this in the family of Shem, and that for an obvious reason. The Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, were of the race of Shem, and upon his family specially rested in these early ages "the blessing of the Lord his God." —(Gen. ix. 26.) It is, therefore, but reasonable to expect that a Divine institution like the Sabbath was more likely to survive and be honoured amongst these people than amongst others, and this the more because the sacred volume is the only authentic record that can be relied on of these very ancient times. In the absence of all direct evidence of Sabbath observance, we yet find indications of the institution in certain well-known customs and usages. The first amongst these is to be noticed the division of time into weeks of seven

days — a system suited neither to their months, which consisted of thirty days, nor to their years, which consisted of 360 days, and which could not, therefore, result from any subdivision of these, nor they from multiplication of seven days. Such a week is, in fact, altogether unsuited to any natural year like the solar, or to a month such as the lunar, and could not, therefore, have originated with them. We seek in vain, therefore, among natural phenomena for such an origin of it; while the institution of the Sabbath, and the reasons of that institution taught by Moses, at once point to one which there is no disputing. Now, that this mode of dividing time was well known in the ages referred to, is obvious from the facts mentioned respecting Jacob, who, marrying two sisters, first fulfilled the bridal week to one, and then to the other.—(Gen. xxix. 21-30.) That these were weeks of seven days is certain from the fact, that the same Hebrew word is employed here to mean week that is everywhere else used throughout the Bible, and further evidenced from what occurs at the bridal feast of Samson, who puts forth a riddle for a reward, "if it can be certainly declared within the seven days of the feast." Such a division, then, of time, we feel justified in presenting as a traditional custom indicative of the primitive institution of the Sabbath.

Equally remarkable is the fact, that amongst the very family and people we have now been referring to, the number seven was regarded with a mystical and superstitious reverence. Seven ewe lambs did Abraham present to Abimelech, in token of his forgiveness for the injury done to him regarding Beersheba. Seven times did Jacob bow before Esau in proof of his submission to him. Seven years did he serve Laban for Rachel, and seven more for Leah. Thus the number had, for some reason or other, obtained special favour in the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and what is more natural than the

conclusion that all this had its origin in that institution which commemorated the course and progress of God's great and gracious work of the creation of the world?

We may observe further, while upon this particular topic, that, in the later periods of the Mosaic dispensation, there are multitudes of instances of this use of the number seven, though doubtless it will be said of them that they may have had their origin in the law of Sinai, and so testify to it, but cannot aid us in our proof, that previous to that law there was some more primitive institution of the Sabbath. We hesitate not to confess that this is perfectly correct; but THEN, while we do so, we are justly entitled to urge, that if one class of facts subsequent to the law of Sinai point, as we freely concede, to it, and claim an origin therefrom, so have we an equal right to demand that a precisely similar class of facts, *previous to* that law, be allowed their due weight, and then of them it must in justice be conceded, that they also point to some institution as having originated them, and thus corroborate our inference, that the Sabbath had an origin long antecedent to the giving of the law to Israel.

The institution of the ordinance of the Passover furnishes us with another example of the division of time into weeks. Seven days are the people commanded to eat unleavened bread in all their houses, and whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day to the seventh, should be cut off. Now, it might be pretended that this appointment was made in anticipation of what was to be enacted at Sinai; but, besides that such a plan seems inconsistent with God's general dealing with man, it is much more agreeable with the condescension he has always mercifully shown, to understand that this division of time was already known to the people; for it is spoken of as if it were, and that God, therefore, graciously

adopted it as the period of the ordinance, because it was one with which the people were well conversant. But this being so, it is therein implied that the people had amongst them the use of this division of time, which, as we have already seen, must have had its origin in that primitive institution which appointed the seventh day as one of holy rest.

To bring down our evidence from this source to the latest period possible, we must refer to the circumstances that occurred in the camp of Israel immediately antecedent to the giving of the law at Sinai, and the relation of which will be found in Exodus xvi. There can be no doubt whatever that the facts here narrated took place nearly a fortnight—that is, they commenced more than a fortnight, and had all occurred more than a week—before the giving of the law at Sinai. The people came to the wilderness of Sin, where they occurred, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their coming out of Egypt, and the circumstances referred to then immediately took place. But the law was not given at Sinai until the third day of the third month after the exodus—that is, the eighteenth day after they came to Sin. But, as the facts we are about to refer to took place during the first seven of these days, so they had all occurred at least ten days before the giving of the law. Now, this is most important; for since, as we shall have occasion to see, the circumstances plainly indicate an acquaintance with the Sabbath, so is it thereby made evident, that such their acquaintance with it was previous to the giving of the law—independent therefore of it, and plainly indicative of an origin of the Sabbath antecedent to the law of Sinai.

Let us now observe the course of events, which are as remarkable as they are instructive. The people, having come to Sin, murmur for want of food, and God in mercy to them addresses Moses: "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that

I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." Now, what is the law of God here spoken of, respecting which the people were to be tried and proved? Certainly not that of Sinai, for it is yet eighteen days before the giving of the law there. That it is a law relating to the Sabbath is beyond all question; for when some of the people went out upon the seventh day and found no food, the Lord said unto Moses, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days." But since it was manifestly a law relating to the Sabbath, respecting which the people were to be proved, and since the law of Sinai had not yet been given, therefore the law referred to must have been the primitive one given in Paradise; and this is fully confirmed by the words of Moses to the people, when the rulers announced to him the fact, that on the sixth day every man had gathered twice as much as on each of the preceding five days. "This," said he, "is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord."

In fact, through the whole of this narrative there were evidently, in the mind of the writer, two facts assumed, without regard to which the account is unintelligible. The first is, that the people had some knowledge of the law by which they were to be proved, and the purport of which was now to be indicated to, and revived in them, by the deposit of manna during six days, and not on the seventh; the second is, that already, and that previously to the promulgation of the law at Sinai, there existed a law of God relative to the Sabbath, the observance of which the people were expected to understand and keep. And both these assumptions plainly evidence

an original of the Sabbath as a Divine ordinance of the Lord previous to the period referred to, and must therefore point back to that when it was first commanded at the creation.

But besides the evidence which the Bible affords us, from its history of the family of Abraham and his posterity, it supplies us with similar proof from other branches of the race of Shem, and forming, therefore, channels of information altogether independent of the house of Israel, although chronicled with theirs. Thus we find, in the customs of other branches of the race, just the same kind of evidence that we meet with elsewhere. The history of Job, for example, who lived in the early times of the postdiluvian age, relates that seven bullocks and seven rams were prescribed as the peace offering to be rendered by him in behalf of his friends. So again Balaam has the same mystical reverence for the number seven, and, on each occasion that he endeavours to propitiate the favour of God by a burnt-offering, he erects seven altars, and sacrifices seven bullocks and seven rams.

To refer once more, before quitting this branch of our inquiry altogether, to the division of time into weeks, we may observe that it has prevailed amongst all the Shemitic nations, as well as amongst others also, as has been very forcibly stated in the following passage of Mrs. Somerville's admirable work, the "Connexion of the Physical Sciences:"—"The period of seven days, by far the most permanent division of time, and the most ancient monument of astronomical knowledge, was used in India by the Brahmins with the same denominations employed by us, and was alike found in the calendars of the Jews, Egyptians, Arabs, and Assyrians; it has survived the fall of Empires, and has existed among all successive generations, a proof of their common origin." And no less a proof, it may be also added, of the primitive original of that Divine institution from which it is

obvious that weeks of seven days have been derived, and of which they are an enduring sign and memorial.

2. Our second channel of information is that which is to be traced amongst the families of Japheth; but in his race there are no records earlier than Homer, so we must be content to glean what we can from them—premising, however, that there is no probability whatever of these nations having acquired such a knowledge of the Mosaic Sabbath, as that traces of it could have interwoven themselves, as we shall find, in their thoughts and habits; and consequently we must refer those to an earlier and more primitive period, such as that in which we know from Moses that the Sabbath was first instituted. We pretend not, in a popular essay like this, to give the exact quotations and their originals, as in a more learned disquisition we should feel bound to do, and therefore we shall but exemplify the traces, in some instances remarkably strong, and are to be found in classical literature. Hesiod, the celebrated Greek poet of Bœotia, who lived about nine hundred years before the coming of Christ, says, "the seventh day is holy." Homer, who flourished about the same period, and Callimachus, also a Greek poet, who flourished in the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes, about seven hundred years later, speak of the seventh day as holy. Lucian, also a Greek writer, born at Samosata, who flourished about four hundred years after Callimachus, says, "the seventh day is given to the schoolboys as a holiday." Now, it is utterly improbable that such a practice as this should ever have originated amongst the Gentiles, from any acquaintance they might have had with the Sabbaths of Israel; for the Jews were never so regarded by the nations, as that they would have adopted and preferred their peculiar and exclusive rites, one of the chief of which was the Sabbath; but it is extremely probable that such a thing as the schoolboys' holiday would long have survived all knowledge

of the circumstance that had originated it; for we have abundant proof of this amongst ourselves, where every parish almost has its annual festival, but the origin of most is altogether unknown. And yet, while the origin of the scholars' holiday was lost to them, how plainly does its continued observance point back to the period when it commenced out of a general tradition of the Sabbath!

Again, in both Greek and Latin poets, we find such frequent use of the number seven, as clearly indicates a mystical use of it, similar to that we have already observed in the Scriptures themselves. The seventh day is spoken of as propitious; the warrior's shield, the most useful weapon of defence, which the apostle employs as the emblem of faith, is constantly represented as sevenfold; vast heaps of snow are said to be piled sevenfold also; and the coils of the serpent, as he lies in act to spring, are sevenfold. Bees are said to live for seven summers; and seven bullocks and seven rams are offerings made by the heathens to their deities.

Our own immediate progenitors, the Saxons, have left us to this day our week of seven days, which evidently must have had its origin in the highest antiquity. They were derived from a different family of Japhetians than the Greeks or Romans were, and their mythology varies greatly from the classical; so that Southey, in his "Book of the Church," remarks, "the heathenism which they introduced bears no affinity either to that of the Britons or of the Romans." This clearly establishes them as an independent channel of information; and yet how strikingly amongst them was the legend of the Sabbath preserved, which survives amongst ourselves at this day, so that we use the heathen names of the days, derived from the pagan deities of our forefathers, and therein are now enabled to trace a primitive origin of the Sabbatical institution from the very earliest ages of mankind!

The Hindus, though regarded as Asiatics from their inhabiting Asia, are not of Shemetic but of Japhetian origin, and their testimony, therefore, belongs to the channel we are at present engaged with. Their astronomy is the most ancient in the world; and what is very remarkable respecting it is, that in its earliest periods it is far more accurate than in later times, evidencing, therefore, that it was the result of observations carried on in those early periods. But throughout it their division of time has been into weeks, which we have so often had occasion to notice as indicative of the primitive institution of the Sabbath. In some of their oldest and most genuine records, though consisting of fabulous relations evidently derived from traditionary legends, we find the number seven employed by them very much in the same way that we have noticed in our Scriptures and classical writers. Some of our oldest architectural monuments are pyramidal in their structure, plainly pointing, as the reader will presently see more clearly, to a primitive origin; and of these one especially is known, as remarkable alike for its antiquity and plan. The pagoda of Seringham is thus described by Mr. Orme, in his History of the Military Transactions of Hindostan:—"It is composed of seven square enclosures, one within the other, the walls of which are twenty-five feet high, and four thick," &c. The ruins of another of these temples still remain on the Coromandel coast, and give to a mountain at Mavalipuram the name of the "Seven Pagodas." Nor is it at all improbable, that if accurate plans and drawings of these and many other remains of antiquity were within reach, we might detect in them additional traces and indications of the institution we are considering. The Bishop of Victoria, in his work on China, gives an account at pp. 172, 173, of a pagoda at Ningpo, erected 900 years since, and called *Teen-fung-tah*, "The tower of celestial wind," which is

hexagonal, and has seven stories. To this also we may here add, that Herodotus, i. 98, describes Ecbatana as built by the Medes in seven circles, with walls of seven different colours.

3. The third channel of information that we have proposed to open up, is one that, like the swarthy complexions of the race composing it, is so dark and mysterious, from the absence of all literature, records, and history amongst them, as to afford but slender hopes of much being derived from it. The children of Ham, known in modern times as the Africans, have amongst them none of the ordinary means or sources of information that the civilised nations of the earth have enjoyed; and amongst the existing tribes of that degraded people, it would be utterly hopeless to attempt to pursue such an investigation as we are engaged in. It must not, however, be forgotten, that in some of their original sites and localities, they have left behind them some memorials of their pristine daring and grandeur; and these, we think, will furnish us with indications of their having at one time been acquainted with such an institution as the Sabbath. It has been already stated, that the children of Ham continued in possession of the tower of Babal in the plain of Shinar, and that when they separated thence, they descended into Egypt, the ancient name of which, and that by which it is still known amongst the Arabs and the Hindus, was Mizraim, that being the name of the son of Ham, who settled with his family here, and first possessed the country. We propose, therefore, to search amongst the earliest remains, both of Babylon and Egypt, for such traces as they may afford of an early traditionary knowledge of the Sabbatical institution.

Babylon at this day offers not a vestige of information. The Birs Nimrod stands a blackened and mouldering heap, testifying strongly, indeed, to the predicted vengeance, that it should be as when

God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, but revealing no more of the past than that lake of oblivion, the Dead Sea itself. But Babylon and the Temple of Belus were visited by the father of profane history, Herodotus, while yet it stood in primeval glory to tell its own tale, and he has left us a most memorable description of it, which runs thus :—"The Temple of Jupiter Belus, whose huge gates of brass may still be seen, is a square building, each side of which is two furlongs. In the midst rises a tower of the solid depth and height of one furlong; upon which, resting as upon a base, *seven other lesser towers are built in regular succession.*" Now, whatever difficulty we may have in imagining from this account the general form and contour of the edifice —which would seem, nevertheless, to have been pyramidal—there can be no doubt as to the principal features of the plan, which consisted of a vast base surmounted by *seven other structures*; and thus we have that peculiar use of the number seven which implies its mystical character, and indicates an origin of no ordinary kind, and which seems alone capable of satisfaction, when we trace it to the Divine institution of the Sabbath at the creation, and recognise in it a faithful memorial of that hallowed ordinance.

We further believe that a similar testimony is to be traced in those mighty monuments of antiquity, the stupendous pyramids of Gizeh or Jizeh. The largest of these is confessed by all to be the most ancient; and the common surmise respecting it is, that it was the tomb of a certain King Cheops. We doubt this entirely, and will endeavour to give our reasons for this as briefly as possible, and yet, as we think, conclusively against it. The authority for assuming it to have been the tomb of Cheops is that of Herodotus, who was so informed by the priests of Memphis, and that the time of its erection was about 900 B.C., or about 450 years before

he visited Egypt. Others, however, have referred it to an earlier period still, and supposed that the children of Israel were engaged in the labour of its construction while in bondage in Egypt. All these and similar inquiries appear to have entirely overlooked one remarkable fact, which will, we think, tend more than anything else to give an idea both of the age and people by whom these oldest pyramids were built. Associated with them is the extraordinary colossal figure of the Sphynx, carved from the living rock in its native bed. Now, the features of this figure are so decidedly Nubian —a variety that is of the African family—that there can be no mistake respecting the race they represent. But African or Mizraitish dominion had been long overthrown in Egypt before the exodus of Israel, and, without entering particularly into the question at this moment, was, we believe, so overthrown when the new king arose who knew not Joseph. Nor was African power ever after in the ascendant there. Could it be probable, then, that the African features should be selected for so noble a work of art *after* the dominion of that race was past? The thing seems wholly incredible, while the contrary is most plausible, that the Africans, the children of Mizraim, the son of Ham, were in undisturbed possession and enjoyment of the land, whenever such a work as the sphynx was conceived and executed. But this sphynx and these early pyramids are manifestly of one date, and the pyramids, therefore, were also built by the children of Mizraim. That they were not tombs, but temples, General Wilford has shown, by a great variety of arguments, in the "Asiatic Researches;" and the general conclusion to which we are led respecting them, but especially respecting the largest—for to that one more particularly do all our remarks tend —is, that the building of it by the sons of Ham, upon their entrance into Egypt, was but the repe-

tition of the sin which had been already committed at Babel, and evidences the justice of the prediction awarded to the whole race of Ham, "Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

We believe, then, that the first, the oldest, and the largest pyramid, was the work of some of those very hands that had laboured at Babel; and coming thence, they brought with them not only the conception of the original structure, but some of the primitive traditions of their race; and of these we would suggest that there are indications of the Sabbatical institution similar to those which Herodotus has recorded respecting the Temple of Belus. Whoever examines the plan of the pyramids, which is to be found in the great French work, "Description de l'Egypte," must observe, that on the same level with the great pyramid, and on a platform apparently prepared for them all, there are placed, at equal intervals along the southern side of its base, six lesser pyramids, all of equal size; and thus we have not only the number seven indicating its mystical use again, but while the six small pyramids denote the six days of labour, the mighty and majestic seventh pyramid elevates itself to the heavens, an appropriate symbol pointing to the heavens, and intimating expressively that the glory of the seventh day far transcends that of all the other six. But even to this day, as recorded by Mr. Freeman, the descendants of Ham preserve amongst them a weekly Sabbath, and maintain an observance of it which, though rooted in superstition, may well put to shame the conduct of professed believers in revelation. They suppose, indeed, that God has given a particular day in the week to each nation; so that while our Tuesday corresponds to the Sabbath in Ashanti, other days are appropriate to the Fantees, the Wassows, and other tribes or nations. While, however, there are those varieties of custom, which

are quite accordant with the uncertainties of tradition, the nature of the day, and their observance of it, are plainly indicated by the fact, that the people honour it by appearing in white garments, and otherwise adorning themselves, and that they assuredly believe that the Titish, there devil god, will be offended with, and will send punishments upon those who, by pursuing their daily labour, show a disregard for the day, which they believe to have been given to them in remote antiquity by the god himself.

IV.—It behoves us, however, to draw our subject to a conclusion, and to state what we rely upon as the results of the whole inquiry, and how far we would press the influence of the facts we have treated of. We pretend not that either severally, or collectively, even, these facts amount to positive proof of the primitive institution of the Sabbath; for we feel the danger of claiming more from evidence than it is legitimately entitled to, and earnestly deprecate the risk of enforcing matters of such great and momentous concern upon too slight a foundation, being convinced that such a system has too often recoiled upon its object to its destruction. We do not ask the reader, then, to accept what we have offered as demonstration of the fact, but we beg him to bear in mind that the fact of the institution of the Sabbath in Paradise, as recorded by Moses in Genesis, has been and is disputed by some who esteem themselves wise and prudent expositors of Scripture, who have obtained some name and fame as commentators, whose opinion on the point is loudly hailed and re-echoed by many worldly-minded and lucre-loving persons, who would use it for their own gain; and thus it is, that the fact itself requires to be supported and corroborated by all the evidence we can adduce. It is not, then, as positive proof, but as CORROBORATIVE and SUBSTANTIATING evidence, that the preceding details have been brought before the reader; and we invite him deliberately to weigh their influence, and

to determine whether the following conclusion from it is not equitable and just:—

Moses states as a fact, that "on the seventh day God ended his works which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—(Gen. ii. 2, 3.) But it is ingeniously represented that Moses does not here state the fact which appears upon the very face of the record, for that the Sabbath was not then instituted, nor until the law of Sinai was promulgated; and that this is a mere account of the circumstances on which the law of the Sabbath is founded, and is nothing more than a proof or comment of the fourth commandment, and not a record of the appointment of the Sabbath in the primitive ages of the world. Now, we contend that the record of Moses does contain this very fact—does reveal the original and primitive institution of the Sabbath, and, consequently, that the Sabbath is an institution appertaining to the whole human race; and, in proof of this, we offer all that amount of corroborative evidence which has been set before the reader, and contend that, amongst all nations and in the earliest ages of the world, long previous to the law of Sinai, there are traces and indications of some such institution as the Sabbath, and that these do incontestably confirm our understanding of the record of Moses, and thereby corroborate and substantiate the fact.

The first direct inference we deduce from this is, that the Sabbath was not, as some pretend, a mere Judaical rite which has passed into desuetude with the other ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation; but that it was, and is, part and parcel of that Divine and awful code—that "holy, just, and good law"—that immutable and inalienable charter which God spake with his own voice, and wrote with his own fingers

upon the two tables of stone; and, further, that it belongs not to one nation, people, or language, but has been liberally bestowed by Him upon all who receive and honour this His holy institution, and who will assuredly learn thereby, that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."

And what is it that has thus been conferred upon mankind? It is a noble BOON, a most gracious GRANT, whereby, in the midst of man's toilsome life, through its whole span, and beshrew even the curse, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," his Maker has mercifully secured to him one-seventh portion of his whole life, to be enjoyed by him one day in every seven, whereon he may rest his wearied body, and refresh his wearied soul, and, separating himself from the present life, its labours, troubles, trials, and temptations, may be "in the world, but not of the world," turning his thoughts to holy and heavenly contemplations; exercising his mind and hopes in eternal aspirations; hallowing, by his thoughts, engagements, and devotions, the day which God has hallowed to himself; and thus by doing the will of God, so learning that the doctrine is of God—that he himself becomes sanctified in remembering the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.

This grant is not, as some esteem it, a mere formal observance—a heavy burden to be borne; but it is a PRIVILEGE—a common RIGHT of man. Like all other testaments of God, it is liable to misconception and abuse; and those who understand not its enjoyment, misrepresent its nature. Being carnally-minded themselves, they cannot comprehend a blessing which is only to be discerned spiritually. But this alters not its character, nor may depreciate its value. God has ordained it, and man cannot annul it. "He hath blessed, and who shall reverse it?" "Yea, let

God be true, and every man a liar." And though all should reject, despise, and forget it, yet it endures irrevocable except by God himself.

The great EXCELLENCY of the grant is not, as many seem to imagine, a mere bodily blessing, designed for the rest and refreshment of man's fainting frame—for this is but a secondary object; and this observance of the Sabbath is not its main use and purpose, but is only preparatory to its great and primary design. This design is the sanctification of man, who experimentally grows in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour, by doing God's law, and keeping holy the Sabbath-day. As a means of grace towards man's sanctification, none, under the blessing of God, is more effectual than the Sabbath. It is a sign between God and man, and has the full assurance of this promise, "Those that honour me I will honour:" while the observance of the Lord's-day as the Sabbath fulfils another promise or commandment, that "all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." And thus, by using the Sabbath spiritually, and worshipping "God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth," and seeking the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we recognise and rejoice in our Triune God, and worship Father, Son, and Spirit, one God everlasting.

This hallowing the Sabbath is its most blessed and vital principle, and is one which we ought to make practical to our own souls, and, in our own self-examination, as a TEST, "a sure and safe one," of our individual sanctification and renewal. If we find the Sabbath "a delight, holy of the Lord and honourable"—if "we are glad when it is said to us, Let us go into the house of the Lord"—if the Sabbath chimes, summoning us to the earthly courts of the living God, are grateful to our ears—if we know the pleasure of public prayer and communion with our fellow-worshippers—if we can enjoy the songs of

praise—if we can in the chamber and in the family find pleasure in prolonging our intercourse with God —if, like Isaac, we can go forth into the field to meditate, and there gladden our feelings with the peculiar sound of silence that seems to vibrate the livelong Sabbath-day—if these and such-like thoughts and enjoyments are ours, we may lay it comfortably to heart, that we are preparing for that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God.

But if we have not attained to this excellent spirit, and are doing our own pleasure, and polluting the Sabbath thereby, let us well beware how we forget, and so tempt the Lord our God. If He, as He declares himself to be, is a jealous God, let us learn to be jealous of His honour and His appointments. Since He has hallowed the Sabbath, and designed it for our use, that we may become hallowed by sanctifying it, let us try ourselves according to His holy standard, and according to the spirit of the Sabbath. If we would take our own pleasure thereon, let us ask, Will our pleasure sanctify the day? for if not, it is contrary to God's holy will. If we would journey thereon, let us ask, Is it no more than a Sabbath-day's journey to the house of God and back, so that we sanctify the day by it? If otherwise, we dishonour the law of God, and God himself thereby. In a word, whatever we would do, let this be the test of its fitness, Will it sanctify the Sabbath-day? Whatever act, pleasure, employment, or pain (always excepting, of course, what Scripture excepts, works of charity or necessity), answers not this condition, and tends not to the hallowing the Sabbath, that thing is sin, because it is contrary to that perfect law which says, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

III.

THE SABBATH NOT A MERE JUDAICAL APPOINTMENT;

WITH AN

EXAMINATION OF THE MORE PREVALENT ARGUMENTS BY WHICH IT HAS BEEN ATTEMPTED TO SHOW THAT THE SABBATH LAW HAS BEEN ABOLISHED OR RELAXED.

BY THE REV. ANDREW THOMSON, B.A.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

THE purpose of the present treatise in defence of the Sabbath, is the examination of some of the more plausible statements advanced by those who assert the Sabbath law to be of *Jewish origin* and *temporary obligation.*

We have looked at these statements, we have even sought to discover the strongest objection put in the most skilful and attractive form, and confess ourselves astonished at the meagre and insignificant array. The objectors do not all belong to one class. Some there are who, animated by hostility to the Sabbath, and having no sympathy with its hallowed associations and benign provisions, cling tenaciously to sophisms and fallacies, because harmonising with their prejudices. There are others who, perplexed by the fallacies which have been so lavishly and confidently thrown of late upon the public mind, are unsettled rather than opposed, and to be regarded not in the character of enemies but of honest inquirers. While there is a third class whose mistaken views on the subject are, for the most part, to be referred to

unfavourable educational circumstances, and who, while rejecting the Sabbath as a Divine institution, still vindicate and observe it as an invaluable ecclesiastical appointment. In reference to the first of these classes, something else is needed than argument, though an important point is gained when they are even put to silence; in reference to the second, everything is to be hoped from candid examination and discussion; and, as regards the third, we do not think it will be difficult to show them that, in cherishing the Sabbath as a human appointment, they have, like the venerable Jewish patriarch, been "entertaining an angel unawares."

Let us, then, once for all, set before us the *real question* at issue. It is not whether there have not been men who, while asserting the unrepealed and unrelaxed authority of the Sabbath law, have acted inconsistently with its requirements; this may affect the character of the men, but in no way does it affect the authority of the Sabbath. Neither is it whether there have not been some men of powerful intellect and sincere piety, who have denied the permanent obligation of the Sabbatic institute; for this may prove nothing more than that there have been great and good men who have erred. Neither is it whether it be not our duty to carry the spirit of religion into every scene, and to make it the animating principle of every service; for it may be that the Sabbath is one of the most valuable means of effecting this very result. The simple question is (which propositions, like those now hinted at, though very profusely mingled with the discussion, do not even touch), *whether there is evidence from the only authoritative source, the Scriptures, that the Sabbath was intended to have authority over all men, and to the end of time.* It is of little consequence in what particular form this evidence is presented; the simple question is, Is it *there?* A beautifully luminous, and to our mind most convincing, summary of this

evidence has been presented in the first of this series of essays, in which the Sabbath has been represented as *published* at the creation; *republished* from Sinai; *observed* and *sanctioned* by our Divine Master, who "came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it;" and unchanged in essence, though becoming the memorial of the spiritual as well as of the material creation, *continued* by the apostles as a permanent institute of the Christian Church.

The force of this evidence has been denied, and we shall now endeavour to follow the objectors from link to link of the chain of proof, and to see whether they have succeeded in destroying its coherence, or in weakening its strength.

I.—EXAMINATION OF DR. PALEY'S ARGUMENT.

Dr. Paley asserts that the Sabbath was first given to the Jews by Moses in the wilderness of Sin; that, like the passover, it began with Judaism, and was a part of it, and, like it, too, its authority ceased when Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." The well-known passage in Gen. ii. 1-3, which seems to the plain reader to make the institution of the Sabbath coeval with creation, and commemorative of it, is affirmed to be *proleptical;* that is, it does not declare that the Sabbath was appointed at the creation, but merely assigns the reason why it was appointed 2,500 years afterwards to the Jews. This was the favourite answer given to the Puritan defenders of the Sabbath, when courtly writers arose to vindicate the infamous "Book of Sports." From them it was borrowed by Paley, who, though he exhibits it with less elaborate learning than those from whom he received it, presents it with all his characteristic compactness and plausibility. That we may have the argument before us in its greatest force, we give it in his own words:—

"If the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of the creation, as the words in Genesis may

seem at first sight to import, and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about two thousand five hundred years, it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the first three Jewish patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and domestic. Nor is there, in the passage above quoted from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, lastly, is any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency." *

On these various grounds it is concluded that the Sabbath was unknown in the world, until the transactions referred to in the wilderness of Sin. We submit whether the following considerations do not deprive the argument of every particle of its seeming force.

1. Suppose we admit that in the inspired records of the first twenty-five centuries of the world's history, there is no reference to the seventh-day rest, would the inference against the primeval appointment of the Sabbath follow as a matter of course? Consider how brief and scanty the records of those twenty-five centuries are. They are all included in one book, and in the first twelve chap-

* Moral Philosophy, book v. ch. 7.

ters of another. Even those records never pretend either to the continuity or the comprehensiveness of history; they are rather the memorials of selected events; the life of one patriarch alone occupies several chapters; the account of the plagues of Egypt spreads through many more. Apply Paley's mode of reasoning to analogous cases, and into what palpable errors would it speedily conduct us! We have a comparatively full account of the Jewish nation from Joshua to David, a period of five hundred years, and yet we search in vain for one remote allusion to the Sabbath: were the Jews, then, without a Sabbath during those five hundred years? The history from Joshua to Jeremiah includes a period of eight hundred years, in the course of which circumcision is never named. Had the Jews, then, during all this time, set aside this Divine institute and national badge? And yet, the inference would be quite as legitimate against the existence of the Sabbath and of circumcision in these two periods, as against the existence of the Sabbath in patriarchal times.

2. But we do not admit that, even in those brief records of the first ages of the world, no traces of the Sabbath are to be found. We shall not descend to minute criticism on disputed Hebrew phrases, though even from some of these, we are persuaded, something might be gathered favourable to our case. We lay our finger on the undisputed fact, which stands out so frequently and in such bold relief in the Book of Genesis, the division of time into weeks, or periods of seven days;* and we combine with this, the existence of the same practice, as proved by the most ancient uninspired documents, in nations the most dissimilar in all their other customs, and the most remote from Palestine and from each other. Explain to us this undoubted fact. A custom so uni-

* Gen. vii. 4, 10; viii. 10, 12; xxix. 27, 28; l. 10 Also Job ii. 3; Exod. vii. 25.

versal, it is evident, can only be accounted for in one of two ways. Either there was some prominent natural phenomenon visible to every eye, that at once suggested the division; or there must have been some institution coeval with our race, and that has descended all along the numerous streams into which the population of the world was eventually separated, from which it would spontaneously originate. The former of these suppositions explains the division of time into days, and months, and years; but what is there in the aspect of the heavens, or in the revolutions of the seasons, to explain why the week should consist of seven days, and not of six, or eight, or ten? and why this should be the measure everywhere? But suppose God at the creation to have blessed and hallowed the seventh day, and you at once suggest an adequate cause. *A primeval Sabbath explains all.* It is the key to an otherwise inexplicable enigma. And until some better explanation is afforded, we must be allowed to regard the division of time into weeks as an unequivocal indication interwoven with the earliest customs of our race, and indelibly imprinted on the sacred page, that the Sabbath was instituted at the creation.

3. Dr. Paley's other assertions are equally questionable. He says, that no permission is recorded to dispense with the Sabbath during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt; but what if it should appear that one reason for the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt was, that they might have liberty to keep the Sabbath, and to present those sacrifices and observe those ordinances which were connected with it? There are not wanting tokens that this was the case. What is the demand which Moses makes of Pharoah in the name of Jehovah? "Let my people go, that they may *hold a feast to me* in the wilderness." "Let my people go, that they may *serve me.*" Does not this imply that, latterly at least, while sojourning in Egypt, the Israelites had been prevented from observ-

ing their religious ordinances, and that their cruel bond-master having blotted out their Sabbath, had made their life one ceaseless round of misery and toil? We are confirmed in this opinion by the words of Pharaoh to Moses and Aaron:—"Wherefore do ye let the people from their works? Behold the people are many, yet ye make them rest from their burdens." The undaunted Hebrew leader had demanded in behalf of his oppressed brethren the restoration of their ordinances, and among them of their Sabbath, with its connected privileges. The infatuated despot refuses. But God himself shall restore them to the Hebrews, and all their other religious privileges. A miracle lays prostrate every firstborn child in Egypt; another miracle opens before them the waters of the Red Sea, whose waves rise up on either side of them "as an heap," and on the borders of the Arabian wilderness the children of Israel stand free. They hasten to keep their feast, and Dr. Paley himself informs us that that feast was the Sabbath. He asserts that the Sabbath was *then instituted*; the whole history of the transaction leads to the conclusion, that the Sabbath was *then restored.*

For, when an important institution is for the first time introduced, we expect it to be done formally. We expect the reasons of its appointment to be specified, the themes which it was to commemorate detailed, and the modes of its observance minutely prescribed. This is done in the institution of the passover, as described in the twelfth chapter of the same book. But the whole history of the transaction in the wilderness of Sin suggests the idea of an institution already known, and the liberty of observing which is now perfectly restored. The passage (Exod. xvi. 22-30) is too long for quotation: but, supposing the candid inquirer to turn to it in the Bible, we ask him to notice and duly consider the following remarks:—In the first place, the people gather *of their own accord* twice as much bread—two omers for one

man—on the sixth day; a fact which it is difficult to account for on any other supposition than that they anticipated and prepared for the rest of the seventh day. In the second place, Moses mentions the Sabbath only *incidentally*, in answer to a question put to him by the rulers. They approach him, and inquire whether the people had done right in gathering a double quantity of manna on the sixth day; and it is this question which leads him to notice the Sabbath: "And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said." What had the Lord said, and to whom had he said it? The fourth and fifth verses of the chapter inform us: "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." The meaning of his words to the rulers, then, is, The people have done quite right; their conduct is in accordance with what the Lord said to me, that they are to gather a double quantity on the sixth day, and that they are also to prepare what they bring in. And then he adds, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning." In the third place, Moses does not speak in the style of one promulgating a new law, nor do we find him giving any instructions whatever as to the manner in which it is to be kept. Indeed, it does not appear that he would, but for the question of the rulers, have adverted to the Sabbath at all on this occasion; and when he does advert to it, it is simply to intimate that because it was a season of holy rest, no manna would fall on that day, and that they were not to seek for it. He does not say to the rulers, The Lord has commanded that to-morrow and every succeeding seventh day *shall be kept* holy to the Lord, but, "To-morrow *is* the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the

Lord;" and this is the reason why a double quantity of manna has fallen on the sixth day. "Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." And when some went on the Sabbath seeking for manna, he reproved them, saying, "See, for that the Lord hath *given you the* Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." Had the Sabbath now been enjoined for the first time, can we doubt that Moses would have done as we find him doing on all similar occasions, delivered it to the people in the name of the Lord, saying, "Thus and thus shall ye keep it." But when we consider that the people gathered spontaneously a double quantity on the sixth day, that Moses notices the Sabbath only incidentally in reply to the questions of the rulers, that he gives no explanation of its nature, or directions as to its observance, and that all that he says regarding it refers to the fact, that on that day no manna was to fall, and that the people were not to go out from the camp to search for it, we feel ourselves shut up by all these considerations to the conclusion, that the wilderness of Sin was not the birthplace of this benign institute, but that the scenes transacted there evidently point back to an earlier and primeval appointment.

4. And when we examine the passage in Genesis which, we assert, contains that primeval appointment, we are confirmed in this conclusion. Everything about it favours the opinion that it records not only what took place in reference to the creation, but at the creation. We quote it, and invite the reader to ponder it with unbiassed judgment. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work

which God created and made." Now, the first question that arises in one's mind on reading these words is, Would it ever enter into the heart of any person that had not a preconceived theory to support, to imagine that they were intended to declare anything else than that the Sabbath was instituted at the creation? The conjecture is so bold as to stagger and surprise us, that the passage is merely explanatory, and refers to an appointment that took place two thousand five hundred years afterwards. Why may not a similar conjecture be entertained regarding any other transaction recorded as having taken place at the creation, and thus the whole authority and certainty of inspired history be unsettled and undetermined? A plain and honest reader, on hearing such an interpretation suggested to him, is tempted to say, "Well, if I cannot understand so plain a narrative as this, I am compelled to distrust my own judgment in seeking the meaning of the simplest statements of Scripture, and must hand over the interpretation of the Bible entirely to the learned."

5. And our view of the passage is unspeakably confirmed, when we consider what the Sabbath was appointed to commemorate, and what blessings it was intended to secure. Its first theme of commemoration was the completed creation. And is this theme interesting to the Jew only, or to man? Creation is finished; the Sabbath, its memorial, it is said, is given to the Jews to keep them in mind of it, two thousand five hundred years afterwards! Is this credible? Or, is it not antecedently far more credible, that the memorial of the event was appointed at the time of the event, and that, as it was universally and unchangeably interesting to the whole race, so it was given to the whole race?

And then, in reference to the blessings which it confers and secures—rest for the body and opportunity of religious instruction and worship for the mind—are these suited to the Jew only, or to man? Experience has proved that man needs a Sabbath. Let it

be wrested from him by tyranny, or wrung from him by avarice, or voluntarily sacrificed by his own indifference, and health decays ere he has passed through early manhood, and the springs of action are relaxed, and the whole being degraded; while, having no time or opportunity for anything like continuous and undisturbed fellowship with God, the knowledge of God is effaced from his mind, and he becomes the ready victim of superstition, or secularity, or scepticism. The Sabbath was intended by Him who knows our frame to prevent these evils, to mitigate the primeval sentence of labour on fallen man, to soothe the sorrows of a labouring world; and, consecrated by an authority which no power might violate, or avarice bribe, every seventh sun as it rose on the horizon was to come with "healing in its wings," announcing to a burdened world its day of holy jubilee, and inviting every child of man to the meditation of immortal themes, to worship and praise. So perfect has experience shown the adaptation of the Sabbath to be to man in all the departments of his complex nature, that it may almost be affirmed, on this consideration alone, that He that made the one appointed the other.

6. And the evidence for its primeval appointment and permanent obligation becomes complete, and to our mind irresistible, when we observe that in a few weeks after the scene which we have been witnessing in the wilderness of Sin, it was "enshrined among the eternal verities of the moral law." For the peculiar solemnity with which the ten commandments were proclaimed, the permanent form in which they were inscribed upon the two tables of stone, the fact that they alone were deposited in the ark, as well as the nature of the commandments themselves, all invest them with this distinctive and peculiar character. There were, in truth, two classes of appointments given to the Israelites at Sinai: those which, being merely ceremonial in their character, began with their peculiar polity and perished with it; and those

which, arising out of the essential relations between God and man, were obligatory before the publication of the Jewish code—obligatory independent of it—obligatory after it had vanished away; and were binding on them not simply as Israelites, but as men. It was natural to expect that these laws would be republished with peculiar indications of their permanence; and such indications appear to have accompanied the giving of the decalogue. But the Sabbath law stands in the very midst of the decalogue! and is the conclusion to be avoided that, like the other nine statutes, it is a part of that common law of the race, which, beginning with the race, was never to become obsolete; and which, though not binding upon us simply because it was given to the Israelites, was now republished to the Israelites, because, from the first it was binding upon all? The language of the commandment evidently looks back to an earlier and formal appointment—"*Remember* the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord *blessed* the Sabbath-day, and *hallowed* it."

It is readily admitted that, in other parts of the Mosaic code, the Sabbath is associated with peculiar sanctions and penalties that are undeniably Jewish and temporary; but so it is also with the first commandment, which forbids idolatry, and with the fifth, which commands obedience to parents. But may not the law be moral, and yet the sanction Jewish? In the other two cases it must be so, and why not in this? Of that, Mount Sinai itself, from which the law was given, may afford our fittest illustration. From the beginning of time it had reared its sublime summit to the heavens. After the lapse of twenty-five centuries, a thunder-cloud was seen resting upon it; mysterious and awful sounds issued from that dread pavilion; the lights flashed athwart and around it; there was the peal of a trumpet, and the voice of words. "If so much

as a beast touched the mountain, it was thrust through with a dart." Anon the clouds rose from off it, the mysterious sounds ceased, and Sinai was beheld as before. So it was with the Sabbath: the thunder-clouds and awful sanctions of Judaism encircled it for a season; but it existed before, and it is to exist now that those have passed away. The sanctions have vanished—the Sabbath remains.

> Time writes no wrinkles on its azure brow;
> Such as creation's dawn beheld, we see it now.

Paley himself admits, that "If the Divine command in reference to the Sabbath was actually given at creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike, and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it." We now ask, Has he succeeded in unsettling the evidence that it was so given?

It is affirmed, however, that such a repeal has taken place, that it was relaxed by our Lord, and entirely repealed by His apostles, and that now, under the Christian dispensation, so far as any Divine appointment is concerned, all days are alike. Let us examine the grounds on which these assertions are made.

II.—EXAMINATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM CERTAIN PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY OF OUR LORD.

One favourite resort of those who contend for a relaxed or repealed Sabbath under the Christian dispensation, is to certain facts in the evangelic narratives. Two especially are referred to—our Lord's repeated working of miracles on the Sabbath, and His disciples plucking the ears of corn as they passed through the corn-fields on that day. These acts, it is affirmed, together with the defence which our Lord addressed to the Pharisees in regard to them, plainly implied, that He wished to loosen the bonds of the Sabbath, and that it was among those things which were soon to vanish away. A very

few statements will be sufficient to dispose of this argument, and to show how utterly the facts are misunderstood and perverted, when they are used for such a purpose.

1. It is important to observe that our Lord was "made under the law," and that, in submitting to circumcision, he acknowledged his subjection even to those appointments which were peculiarly Jewish.

2. We find him paying habitual respect to the Sabbath. "*As his custom was,* he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read."—(Luke iv. 16.)

3. But there is evidence that the Sabbath law had become encumbered and perverted by Jewish interpretations and traditions. Its benignant spirit had been extracted from it, and what in its Divine simplicity was a boon of inestimable value, had become a burden and a bondage. It seemed as if man had been made for the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath for man. For example, according to the interpretation of the rabbins, a man might fill a trough with water for beasts to *come* and drink, but he might not *carry* water to *them*. In like manner, according to one school it was not lawful to heal or to minister to the sick on the Sabbath-day. Most impious and absurd perversion! But what was needful in such a state of society evidently was, not so much that the Sabbath law should be republished, as that it should be rescued from perversions alien from its whole spirit and design. And that its genuine character might be all the more effectively and impressibly brought out, let the lesson be taught in connexion with certain incidents that shall make it memorable. We find our Lord doing this with other appointments of a moral and permanent kind. And He would only be acting in character did He do so with this.

4. Now this, we are convinced, is the true view of the facts in our Lord's history on which we are now commenting. *They were not meant to relax, but rightly to expound the Sabbath law.* This is evident

from the modes of defence which He adopts in all of the cases referred to. These vindications vary, but they all speak with one voice, not "I am about to abrogate the Sabbath," but "I wish to deliver it." On one occasion He appeals to His Divinity: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;"—that is, "In performing miracles such as you have now seen me perform, I act as God; and even as my Father, in conducting His providential administration, never suspends its movements, so it is with me in performing miracles." But, on other occasions, He makes His appeal to analogous cases in the history of their nation, or to their own conduct. "David ate of the shew-bread in the tabernacle to relieve the cravings of hunger, and thus to save health and life. Why, then, blame my disciples for eating the ears of corn when prompted by a similar necessity? Go and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Again, "If an ox or an ass fall into a ditch on the Sabbath-day, will ye not draw it out again? Am I then justly charged with violating the Sabbath, because I have healed this man with the withered hand; or, because this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, hath been loosed by me from her bonds on the Sabbath-day?" Now we ask, Is this like the course of defence that our Lord would have adopted, had the Sabbath been on the eve of its decay? But is it not the very mode of defence that we should have expected Him to adopt, had His design been to relieve it from the rubbish of Pharisaism, and to present it in its primeval and untarnished beauty? Suppose you saw a man taking pains to restore a defaced inscription on a pillar, to remove from it the rubbish that had been heaped around its base, and to tear away the ivy that surrounded its summit, would you not infer that it was His intention that the pillar with its inscriptions should remain for the information of after ages? Such was now the conduct of our Lord in reference to the Sab-

bath law. And it is very much to the point to remark, that a case cannot be produced from the whole evangelic history in which He took similar pains with the explanation of a mere ceremonial appointment. "Our Lord," says a profound and accurate thinker, "corrected those errors alone which had disfigured the pure maxims of the law of universal obligation; we find no corrections made by Him of temporary or national ordinances."*

As for the fact of our Lord's "eating" in the house of a certain Pharisee on a Sabbath-day, we may safely allow the apologist for a relaxed Sabbath to make all the use he can of this circumstance, when, like the Divine Saviour, he is without a home, and when a desire to be instant in season and out of season for the glory of God is the only motive of his visit. Has it never occurred to those who appeal to this fact, that even the Pharisees themselves saw nothing in it inconsistent with their highest notions of Sabbath-keeping?

III.—EXAMINATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THE CHANGE OF THE DAY, AND FROM CERTAIN PASSAGES IN THE APOSTOLIC EPISTLES.

The objector further appeals to apostolic history and epistles. It is said, "If the Sabbath be an institution of permanent and unchanging obligation, why was it not enjoined by the apostles? You reply, indeed, that its observance was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, and that this transference by apostolic authority amounted to an injunction; but in the case of a moral appointment, such as you affirm the Sabbath to be, we can no more suppose the day to be changed, than the institution itself. And besides, we can discover no apostolic authority for such a change. Produce a text commanding it, and we will believe you. We," say the objectors, "can produce more than one text commanding its entire abolition, and declaring that, under the Christian dispensation, every day is to be alike. 'Let no man

* Stopford.

therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.'—(Col. ii. 16, 17.) 'One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.'—(Rom. xiv. 5.)"

This objection is more frequently insinuated than formally stated; but if we have not very much misapprehended the scope of many passages in pamphlets and in public journals, there are some such thoughts as these lurking in the minds of their authors. It will be observed that the objection consists of various links, some of which must be examined singly, but, when closely scrutinised, the whole will be found to fall to pieces. We submit to the candid inquirer the following remarks:—

1. Let us settle first principles, and understand what is the essence of the Sabbath law. Is it not this, that a certain portion of time, say a seventh, shall be separated from common to sacred uses, and consecrated to religious worship? Whether that day shall be the sixth, or the seventh, or the first, is a mere matter of external and positive appointment, which does not enter into the essence of the Sabbath at all. The institution may remain intact, though the day be varied. Hence the command is, "Remember"—not the seventh—but the "Sabbath-day to keep it holy." Now, let us imagine that in the history of revolving ages, new manifestations of the Divine character are made to the sons of men—manifestations that exceed in glory that which the Sabbath was first appointed to commemorate—there would be no invasion of its essence, but an enhancing of its grandeur, and of its moral suggestiveness, were it to be constituted the memorial of these sublimer manifestations. It would still be the Sabbath—the day set apart for the meditation of the Divine character, as it has been more fully unveiled in successive revelations.

2. And this is what we affirm has actually been

done. In that work of redemption, which was completed when our Lord arose from the dead, the character of God was displayed with a lustre which threw the glories of creation into the shade. It was the grand manifestation of God's moral attributes—"the creation of a new heaven and a new earth." The Sabbath was henceforth to be the memorial of both, and now most prominently of the last and greatest. The first day of the week that witnessed the completed redemption, thus became more appropriate than the seventh; and it was meet also, that, in accordance with this, the sacred institute should receive a new name, and be called the "Lord's-day." But while these changes took place in what might be called the externals and accidents of the day of holy rest, it was still, in its essence, the Sabbath that had existed for 4,000 years. It was like the ark of God changing its place from the tabernacle of David to the temple of Solomon—the chosen symbol, as from the beginning, of God's presence and blessing. The ark was still the ark, although it changed its place; and the Sabbath is still the Sabbath, although it has changed its day.

3. Is it now asked, What evidence have we of the transference of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? We answer, What is the nature of the evidence required? Is it an express command? There is none such. But there is what is equivalent. There is the fact that our Lord left authority with His apostles to organise the institutions of His Church; for "whatsoever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven." There is the fact that, by their example, they sanctioned the change of the day, and the permanence of the institute. There is the fact that, ere the last survivor of the apostles died, the change had become universal; in other words, there is the evidence of apostolic arrangement, which will be as authoritative with a Christian disciple as apostolic command. "The mind and will of God concerning any duty to be performed by us," says Jonathan

Edwards, "may be sufficiently revealed in his Word, without a particular precept in so many express terms enjoining it. The human understanding is the ear to which the Word of God is spoken; and if it be so spoken that the ear may plainly hear it, it is enough. God is sovereign as to the manner of speaking his mind, whether he will speak it in express terms, or whether he will speak it by saying several other things which imply it, and from which we may, by comparing them together, plainly perceive it. If the mind of God be but revealed, if there be but sufficient means for the communication of his mind to our minds, that is sufficient; whether we hear so many express words with our ears, or see them in writing with our eyes; or whether we see the thing that he would signify to us by the eye of reason and understanding." Indeed, to prescribe to God in what terms He shall make known His will, is to share in the presumptuous unbelief of those Pharisees, who would prescribe to Christ by what sort of signs He would attest His authority.

4. As for the two passages from the apostolic epistles (Rom. xiv. 5; Col. ii. 16, 17), which have been paraded with so much confidence, it is quite evident that they refer to the attempt of Judaisers to make the observance of the seventh day, as well as of the first, binding upon the Christian Churches. The apostle interferes to protect their Christian liberty. They might observe the seventh day if they chose, but no man was to compel them to do so, or to condemn them if they did not. To suppose that these verses were intended by the apostle to declare that all days under the Christian dispensation were alike, is to suppose him to write one thing and to practise another.

The chain of evidence, then, for the perpetuity of the Sabbath is unbroken; no link fails. We trace it in the earliest records of patriarchal life, and in the latest inspired memorials of apostolic times. Those footprints which we first beheld in Eden, we trace in Patmos, where the beloved apostle was "in the Spirit on the LORD'S-DAY."

And to have the scriptural authority for any observance certified is, with a Christian, to have the matter set at rest. Cavil and question then become impiety. The first question with a Christian is, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" and it is his last question too. And so should it be with every man. Efforts are often made, however, by indirect means, to prevent the legitimate force of the Scripture evidence. A prejudice is attempted to be raised against the Sabbath, by representing it to be oppressive, or it is insinuated to be unnecessary, or the opinions of a few great men, placed in circumstances very much fitted to mislead, are triumphantly paraded against the almost unanimous voice of the Evangelical Churches. We shall close our essay by glancing at a few of these.

IV.—EXAMINATION OF MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS AND POPULAR FALLACIES.

1. Sometimes an aspect of harshness is attempted to be thrown around the Sabbath, and it is spoken of as a thing of mere arbitrary restraints. It is said, for example, Why forbid the ingenious mechanic, who has been sweating over the anvil, or bending over the loom, or cooped up in the crowded factory, to give himself up on this day to amusement and recreation? Let him angle in the stream, or sail on the river, or explore the forest, or ascend the mountain, and inhale its breeze and expatiate on its sublime prospects; and let the rustic labourer, on the other hand, visit our cities, and enter our museums, and libraries, and picture-galleries. Must that not be a burdensome institute which interdicts such recreations? and must not those be wanting in all benevolence and sensibility who would vindicate it from popular encroachment? Such is the covert of assumed philanthropy, from which the Sabbath is not unfrequently assailed.

But on what pretence is the Sabbath to be charged with trenching on the enjoyments of the artisan? What is it but the Sabbath that has secured for him a seventh day of rest, and, fencing it round with a

Divine barrier, has said to tyranny, This is the poor man's day, you may not wrest it from him; to secularity, you shall not buy it from him; to the poor man himself, you may not yield it up or sell it? Doubtless, it is most intensely to be wished that far more time were allowed to the hard-wrought masses of our population for bodily recreation and amusement; and in a state of society which the principles of the Bible thoroughly leavened and regulated, this would most certainly be secured. But are not the intelligence and morality of a people of infinitely more importance both to their individual happiness and to national strength? We wish to see secured for the artisan time for recreation, but we wish to see secured for him time for religion too; and shall we be asked to sacrifice the more important for the less important? Would not recreation itself, without intelligence and morality, rapidly degenerate into brutal licentiousness? And how are these to be secured by those sons of toil without a weekly recurring day given to converse with Divine truths and eternal realities? Let the real state of the case be clearly seen. The hours for recreation on common days have gradually passed from the hands of the working man; commercial enterprise has bought them up and changed them into hours of toil; and now when the question is asked, What time shall he have for recreation? the answer given is, His Sabbath-day. Well, let us suppose the presumptuous and impious demand yielded, what security has he that his Sabbath once given to recreation would not soon be demanded for toil also, and the poor deluded artisan discover, when it was too late, that that blessed institute which had enshrined his dignity, his liberty, and his immortal interests, was lost; and that, in an evil hour, he had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage? The man of toil is insulted by that sentimentalism which never looks above his physical condition, and shuts out the idea that he is an immortal being, travelling to an eternal world.

And surely it is a far truer philanthropy which delights to behold him exchanging not mere animal toil for animal recreation, but moving with a virtuous household to that hallowed place where rich and poor meet together, raising his thoughts above all that is sordid and secular, holding converse with themes that at once dignify and purify, receiving motives to virtuous action, solace to grief, and with "looks commercing with the skies," meditating on those things into which even angels desire to look. These are the men that make an empire great by keeping it virtuous—the salt of the earth, the lights of the world.

2. Would we, then, interdict the study of the works of God, it is sometimes asked, and denounce every man as a Sabbath-breaker who, on the first day of the week, was found meditating in the fields, or musing by the river side or the ocean shore, or turning his gaze upward to the starry firmament? It is worthy of remark that the objector has here shifted his ground. Formerly he demanded the Sabbath for amusement, now he asks that a portion of its precious hours may be given to the devout contemplation of the Divine handiworks. This is a favourite position with some; but two simple statements will be sufficient to dispose of it.

(1.) It is never to be overlooked that the most important revelation which God has given of himself to man, is that contained in His written Word, and that it is to the study of this especially that the return of the Sabbath invites him. He stands to God in the relation not of an innocent creature, but of a guilty sinner; and it is in the knowledge of God as He is revealed in His Word—that is, not simply as his Creator, but as his Redeemer—that he finds the means of his deliverance. Now it is to God, in this combined relation, as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are to offer worship; and one of the most prominent and gracious ends intended by the gift

of the Sabbath, was to secure opportunity to his people for performing this service, and for performing it socially—"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Any service rendered to God, merely viewed as his Creator, by a human being in the assumed position and character of innocence, should be rejected like Cain's proud and impious offering of the fruits of the earth. A mere intellectual homage to the power, wisdom, and beneficence of God as seen in creation, made a substitute for the evangelical and contrite worship of a scripturally enlightened and renewed heart approaching God in His own appointed ordinances, and through His own blood-consecrated medium of access, is an utter perversion of the very spirit and purpose of the Sabbath, and a kindling of strange fire upon the altar of God.

(2.) At the same time, there is no enlightened friend of the Sabbath who would hesitate to admit, that, in connexion with the more peculiar and prominent services of the Sabbath, and in subserviency to them, no exercise can be more appropriate or congenial than the devout contemplation of the works of God. The Sabbath intermingles in itself the memorials of creation and of redemption; and so should he that would rightly hallow the Sabbath, intermingle them in his thoughts. But then, let us clearly understand what is meant by the *devout contemplation* of the works of God. Not surely what so often passes for this in practice, the mere Sabbath walk or holiday stroll, the enjoyment of which principally depends on keeping God out of the thoughts, and which so often, beginning with undevout frivolity, ends in crime;—not even the solitary musings of the man who has an eye for the mere beauties of scenery. The truth is, that everything in a case like this depends on motive and spirit; so that we can easily conceive two sons of a pious father going forth on a Sabbath evening, from beneath the parental roof, into the neighbouring

garden or field, and while their external conduct is very much alike, the one shall in the sight of God be a Sabbath-breaker, and the other not: for the first has merely gone forth to escape from pious exercises and holy conversation which he does not relish, to wile away the vacant hours that make him exclaim, in heart, of the Sabbath, "What a weariness is it!" to indulge unmolested the waking dreams of avarice or ambition, perhaps even to invite temptation in its grosser forms: the other has walked forth, like Isaac, with a heart attuned to devotion, intent to "meditate at even-tide," and every object in nature is, like Jacob's ladder, the pathway of his thoughts to heaven; each flower suggests an emblem or a lesson; the azure firmament is itself a sublime revelation; ocean is to him the mirror of the Almighty, and the emblem of eternity—

> His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
> And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy
> With a propriety that none can feel,
> But who, with filial confidence inspired,
> Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
> And smiling say, My Father made them all.

This would undoubtedly be Sabbath-keeping, though, even from the solitary walk in the field or by the ocean-shore, we can conceive a Christian disciple, in the present state of society, to abstain, aware how liable his example is, in such a case, to be abused, and well knowing that many things which are lawful are not expedient.

3. Occasionally, however, the objector strangely alters his tone, and from complaining of the harshness of the institute which sets apart one day in seven entirely to religious services, declares the appointment to be unnecessary, because a true Christian will make a Sabbath of every day. "I am an every-day Christian," you will sometimes hear it said; "why talk of one day in seven for religion? My idea is, that every day of the seven should be a Sabbath." It has been justly noticed,

that those who speak thus are not always the most religious of persons, and that if they believe that every day should be a Sabbath, their notions are very low indeed of what a Sabbath should be. But apart from this, there are two things which we deem it sufficient to urge in reply to this objection.

(1.) It utterly misrepresents our views. Who ever taught, who ever thought, that in arguing that one day in seven was to be kept holy to the Lord, all the other six days might in this case be given to a uniform and undisturbed secularity? Can a more thorough perversion of our meaning be imagined than this—"Be religious on the first day of the week, and you may be as worldly as you like on the other days?" No; the true spirit of the Sabbath appointment is, not that we should condense the religion of the week into the Sabbath, but that we should carry forth from the Sabbath its hallowed impulses and feelings into the other days of the week, to elevate and sustain us amid its wearisome secularities and depressing cares. Our souls are to be attuned and attempered then. "The Lord has given us the Sabbath," not to relieve us of our religion, but so to revive our religion on that day, as to impel its healthy tide into the remotest nook and corner of every-day duty.

(2.) And general experience abundantly proves that, constituted as human nature is, and circumstanced as the vast majority of our race are, and ever must be, some such appointment as the Sabbath is indispensable to the keeping alive of religion in the hearts and habitations of our people. For the question is not how a man of retired habits and abundant means could keep his godliness in vigour without a Sabbath-day, but how the erasure of this day from the list of moral appointments—in other words, the degrading of it to common uses—would affect those whose waking hours on other days are almost wholly engrossed by traffic or toil. Extinguish the Sabbath, and religion has only the little intervals between the

hours of labour in which to proclaim her lessons and to assert her claims. And if, even with the Sabbath on her side, which commands all to be silent that she may be heard, she finds it difficult to maintain her supremacy, what would be the case were her voice only to be raised amid the thousand discordant sounds of secular pursuits? You bid her fashion the iron, and you will not give her time to beat it; you bid her paint her image, but it is upon moving canvas. With one hand you propose to draw water from the cistern, while, with the other, you have cut off the communication of that cistern with the lake that feeds it. That man may be kept religious, he must give to the subjects of religion more than the mere snatches of time or half thoughts; hours upon hours must be set apart, in which its hallowed associations and holy employments shall have opportunity to exert their full influence. Deprive him of this, and your every-day Sabbath will soon turn out to mean no Sabbath at all.

4. Another attempt is sometimes made to loosen the sense of obligation in respect to Sabbath observance, by insinuating that the evidence is of so dubious a nature, that much may be said on both sides. It is at the most a balancing of probabilities. No one will be blamed for not discovering a law but dimly written—so dimly, that if it is binding at all, it must be admitted that there are persons of undoubted piety in our age, especially on the Continent, who do not feel or acknowledge it to be so. We have said enough in previous portions of this essay to show that we do not admit the truth of the statement on which this apology proceeds. We hold, with Jonathan Edwards, that "the command is so plainly spoken that the ear may hear it, and this is enough." At the same time, we are prepared to admit, in reference to this and many other duties, that it is quite a possible thing for a mind that is desirous of evading the evidence regarding it, to succeed in doing so. It is a profound observation of

Pascal's, that many principles and precepts are presented in the Word of God in such a manner as to operate as moral tests—that is, they are presented with just so much of distinctness that an individual free from prejudices, and seriously intent to discover the mind of God, will find them there; while, on the other hand, they do not stand forth upon the sacred page with such a prominence, and amid such a blaze of demonstration, but that the mind which dislikes the doctrine or the duty may evade its evidence. Suppose this to be in some degree the case with the law of the Sabbath, would it excuse the man who did not see it in the Bible? or would not his rejection of the Sabbath, in such circumstances, afford a culpable instance of that moral perversity which makes the eye dim that it will not see, and the ear heavy that it will not hear?

The reference to some of the Protestant Churches on the Continent will not serve the purposes of the objector. We know that long familiarity with a sinful practice diminishes the sense of its sinfulness. It is thus that we account for the feeble tone of condemnation in which some of the American Churches speak of the heaven-defying slave system. But the assertion itself of a prevailing doubt is much too unqualified; for it is a fact that, just as the slumbering Churches on the Continent are awakening to life, they are acknowledging the necessity of a Sabbath, and that their most enlightened and pious pastors are at this moment sighing for its restoration—reminding one of Nehemiah going forth by moonlight, and marking the ruined walls of Jerusalem and the gates thereof consumed with fire, and calling on the people to rise up and build the wall.

Lastly. The enemies of the Sabbath have been fain to take refuge under the authority of a few great names. Luther and Calvin, it is said, did not hold such rigid views. Suppose they did not. It is forgotten that their position was peculiarly un-

favourable for the examination of the subject. They looked at the Lord's-day among many days of mere human appointment; it was hidden like Saul among the stuff. Is the wonder great that they were tempted to reject all sacred days whatever? The impetuous nature of the great German reformer led him to reject other things that were Divine, such as the Epistle of James. What wonder that, in removing some of the rubbish of the temple, these great men should unconsciously have swept away with it some of its purest gold? Their circumstances called more for energetic action than for discrimination.

But we, who live in these later and calmer days, have had time to discriminate, and we can now discover in the lax views which some of the leading reformers entertained on the subject of the Sabbath, and in the laxer practices which those views introduced into the Churches, one reason why the tide of the Reformation ebbed so soon. They planted a vineyard, but they forgot to place around it God's wall of defence; and thus it is that "the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."

But has it indeed come to this, that a duty may be held as uncertain until there is perfect unanimity among Christians regarding it; and that so long as some great name can be quoted as speaking doubtfully on the subject, the obligation is suspended? Admit this principle, and then tell us what error or folly is there that may not borrow the sanction of some great name. Luther might then be quoted as advocating views of the Lord's Supper that savour of mysticism, if they do not border on absurdity; the name of Calvin might be used to consecrate intolerance; Milton might be brought in as the patron of lax and dangerous notions on the subject of divorce; Baxter might be appealed to as a believer in ghosts and apparitions; one illustrious name of our own times might be cited in favour of

the use of the crucifix in our secret devotions; and another, in opposition to the formation of Christians into distinct and visible societies. But what would this be but falling back upon one of the worst maxims of the Jesuits, that any practice is allowable to a disciple in favour of which he can quote *one* of the fathers, and which drew upon that society the polished and scorching sarcasm of the "Provincial Letters." Has it yet to be proclaimed that true Protestantism involves in it not only the *right* but the *duty* of private judgment, and that, rising above all reformers and fathers, the Christian disciple has ever to remember that "One is his Master, even Christ?"

Were it not that a far abler pen has already referred to another fallacy, we should have been tempted to notice it at some length. "Everything ceremonial," it has been said, "was done away when Christ arose from the dead. Not one lingering shred of carnal ordinances remains under this mature and spiritual economy." Admitted: but what then? Is the Sabbath law therefore repealed? Oh, most preposterous conclusion! The law which provides for the children of toil and the sons of commerce,

> Hackney'd in business, wearied at that oar
> Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, leave no more,

opportunity of undisturbed attention to spiritual things, this day the badge of an immature economy, a burdensome right which was against us, and contrary to us, too carnal for Christianity or for Christians! Surely it is enough to put such a suggestion as this in plain language, in order to expose it. Would not the real state of the case be found to be, not that the Sabbath was too carnal for those who speak thus, but that they are not spiritual enough for the Sabbath. At least, it is a significant fact which these objectors might do well to ponder, that the most eminently spiritual Christians have ever been those who relished the Sabbath most. "Oh, surely," was the frequent exclamation of the pious Philip

Henry, at the close of a well-spent Sabbath, "if this be not heaven, it must be the way to it!"

These and similar objections are easily disposed of, and yet their very existence and their public reiteration prove to us, that we have reached a crisis in the cause of the Sabbath in our land. And we shall be sinfully blind to the magnitude of the interests that are imperilled, and to our own responsibility, if we do not strain every nerve to make the crisis terminate favourably. It is a thing of no secondary or transient interest that is assailed, when the weapons of an unhallowed warfare are lifted up against this institute of heaven. With our Sabbath-day, all that is most valuable to us as citizens, and most sacred to us as Christians, stands in jeopardy. Call for testimonies to its importance and benignant influence, and what "a cloud of witnesses" instantly compass us about! View it simply as a day of rest, and the whole medical world would arise to proclaim its beneficent tendencies. View it in its relations to the industrial wealth of kingdoms, and statistical inquiries will attest that six days of labour, followed by the weekly rest, are more productive than a system of continuous toil. View it in its bearings on the stability of commonwealths, and one of the greatest modern statesmen, Edmund Burke, will tell you that it is inestimable. View it as a bulwark against the inroads of infidelity, and Voltaire, who not only rejected Christianity, but vowed to crush it, will confess that he despaired of effecting his object so long as people would assemble every week for religious worship. View it as affecting the prosperity of Christian Churches, and all history will point to its observance or neglect as the infallible index of spiritual prosperity or decay; and the Churches of Great Britain, of New England, and of the Waldenses, will be named as having been for ages the most Sabbath-keeping and the most pure. View it as contributing to fan the flame of personal piety, and

to deliver the soul from the gathering mists of earthly feeling, and Wilberforce will hasten to assure you that it was his Sabbath-musings which raised his soul when it was ready to cleave to the dust, and saved him from plunging into the troubled and turbid waves of party warfare; and every man of living piety will tell you that it accords with the instincts of his new nature, and that, if God had not given him a Sabbath, he would have prayed for one. Oh, shall we lightly fling from us this blessed birthright? or shall we not rather be jealous against even the least invasion of its integrity, and seek to transmit it to our children, and to our children's children, in unimpaired sanctity? How does its weekly return, bending over us like the bow in the cloud, with its sublime memorials of creation and redemption, invite and attract our meditations upwards, and even seem to open a pathway for our feet into the heaven of heavens. Would we have this radiant memorial blotted out, and gaze upward only upon the dark clouds that have been gathered from our human cares and sorrows? Or, remembering the truths which it commemorates, and the blessings of which it is the Divinely-constituted vehicle and guard, shall we not hail its earliest beams with those words of the Psalmist, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will be glad and rejoice in it?"

O day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,
The indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a Friend, and with his blood;
The couch of time; care's calm and bay;
The week were dark but for thy light:
Thy torch doth show the way.

Thou art a day of mirth:
And where the week-days trail on ground,
Thy flight is higher, as thy birth;
Oh let me take thee at the bound,
Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
Till that we both being toss'd from earth,
Fly hand in hand to heaven!

IV.

THE ADAPTATION OF THE SABBATH TO THE TEMPORAL WELLBEING OF MEN, AND MORE ESPECIALLY OF THE WORKING CLASSES,

WITH

APPLICATION OF THE ARGUMENT TO SABBATH RAILWAY TRAVELLING.*

BY THE REV. DAVID KING, LL.D.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE Sabbath is not secured from invasion by any natural fences. The winter presents impediments to labour; and thus, in many instances, constrains masters to diminish the tasks assigned to the labourer. Night is still more obstructive to toil; and, therefore, still more conducive to needful repose. The sun goes down; and in the absence of his light, the field cannot be ploughed, nor the house built, nor the vineyard dressed; and thus darkness itself shelters the couch of the labouring and heavy laden. The Sabbath has no such bulwarks. It comes without note of its advent; and all nature fulfils its functions on that day as on other days. The weather may then happen to be tempestuous, and may present no

* Dr. Chalmers had engaged, a short time before his death, to write one of the tracts of this series, and had chosen for his subject that which is discussed in these pages. No one can feel more deeply than I do the loss which our enterprise has sustained by his lamented removal; and the accidental circumstance; that I had happened to select the same topic before I knew of his preference, is the only reason why it has been subsequently recommitted to my charge. The distinguished man who was to have performed this service, had his mind full of it. His conception and plan were formed, and he spoke with enthusiasm of giving them expression; but what they were cannot now be ascertained, for no trace of them has been found among his writings. His departure, in these circumstances, is admonitory to all survivors, and teaches us to observe the Sabbath on earth, as in the prospect of enjoying that better rest which remains for the people of God.

temptation to pleasurable excursions or exposed occupations; but it is just as possible that it may be otherwise—that days preceding may have been boisterous and uncongenial, and that the sun may then rise without clouds, and the reviving foliage sparkle in his beams, and the birds of the air, with invigorated wing and enraptured song, salute the king of day; and all that the eye sees or the ear hears may seem to invite the idle to enjoy themselves, and the industrious to secure, while they can, the benefits of their diligence. The Sabbath thus appears, amidst periods of time, like a small and level country in the midst of aggressive States, without sea, or alp, or den to ward off invaders, or interpose the smallest check to their rapacity and ambition. Or, to use a scriptural figure, it resembles the vine described by the Psalmist, when bereft of its hedges which any boar out of the wood might waste, and any beast of the field might devour.

But even the seasons, having a natural protection from encroachment, have yielded to the pressure of grasping and engrossing traffic. During winter, labour may be *varied;* in countries like our own it is rarely *suspended*; and even the release of the night —still more indispensable to our feeble frames—is disturbed and abriged till it inadequately suffices for its gracious purposes. In numberless instances the toilworn ply their functions while the shadow lengthens, and the sun sets, and the evening advances, and the night around them grows dark as their own condition. Or they are summoned from their beds before deep sleep has well fallen upon them, or exhausted nature has rallied its forces, that they may prosecute their vocation by the lurid glare of lamps and fires, ere the sun has yet arisen with his silvery beams. If, then, protected seasons have been invaded and trampled on by secular pursuit, must not the unprotected Sabbath be exposed to very special and imminent jeopardy? When we look at the state of Christendom, we perceive, as a matter of fact, that

in a large proportion of it the Sabbath is practically annihilated. Has France a Sabbath? Its open shops, and restless engines, and empty cathedrals, and crowded theatres, answer in the negative. Other European countries are in a similar condition; and with these facts before us, broad as nations, who can deny that a virtual suppression of the Lord's-day is both conceivable and possible. Our own country is moving in the same direction. Every effort is made by a section of the community to disprove the scriptural obligations of the Sabbath, and thus remove it from the only foundation on which it may impregnably stand; and, at the same time, usages are introduced and extended, which, if they do not differ in principle from liberties formerly taken with the Sabbath, are, at all events, on a new scale of magnitude; and may soon come to be distinguishable from prior customs, as a hurricane is from a breeze, or a general inundation from a local flood.

Is the Sabbath, then, an important institution? If it be of little or no value, we shall have some excuse for standing by and leaving it to its assailants. But if it be of real and incalculable moment to the interests of humanity, then surely we ought to display a resolute and efficient, though, at the same time, reasonable and enlightened zeal in preserving the imperilled treasure, and do what in us lies to secure for posterity a blessing won for ourselves by the efforts, sufferings, and prayers of godly progenitors. Others have already presented the proof for the Divine appointment of the Lord's-day. The argument appears to me decisive; and where God commands, it is ours to obey. To admit that any precept emanated from God, and yet set it aside on some pretext of expediency, would be equal folly and presumption. We know, however, that all the ordinances of Jehovah must be worthy of himself. The Sabbath is frequently exhibited in His own Word as wearing a benignant character, which we are thus invited to contemplate. Numbers, indeed,

think of it very differently. They conceive of the Sabbath as a day which God would keep from them, and reserve for himself. They regard it as an exaction or as a badge of servitude. The Scriptures, on the contrary, assure us that the Sabbath is a boon to be gratefully accepted. Jehovah, we are told, has *given* us the Sabbath: it is a gift calling for gratitude. The same principle is enunciated by our Lord, when He alleges that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. In what respects, then, is the Sabbath a blessing to man, showing adaptation to his constitution, and kind regard for his happiness?

It might be shown in many particulars, that a stated season of devotion is essential to our spiritual wellbeing. Admit that we are moral agents—that we must all give an account to our Maker—that we are to be for ever blessed or wretched, according to the use we make of existing privileges—and it appears almost self-evident, in these circumstances, that a portion of time should be regularly and sacredly appropriated to the service of God and preparation for eternity. If the only rule in regard to religion were, that it could be attended to any time, the consequence would be, that it would receive attention at no time; its duties would be now and again postponed, till they were eventually neglected. If the soul, then, is to walk with God, and cultivate meetness for a better world, there must be a day set apart for devotion—there must be a Sabbath, and that Sabbath must be religiously kept. The season is precious as the heavenly-mindedness to which it is indispensable. You read its worth in the gifts and graces of a spiritual creation; and short as its duration is, and occasional as is its coming, it ranks in importance with that glorious inheritance, to which, by such means of grace, Jehovah conducts His people, and where the noblest bliss is enjoyed in all its perfection, throughout all ages, world without end.

My design at present, however, is to fix attention mainly on the *temporal* advantages of the Sabbath.

These are most doubted of, and, on the part of not a few, are scouted with derision. The point in dispute is represented as a question between punctilious and ritual worship on the one hand, and a free enjoyment, on the other, of those palpable and substantial benefits which a bountiful Providence proffers to our reception. When the question is so stated, it is easy to insinuate that it answers itself, and that a preference of rigid forms to rich enjoyments cannot have been demanded by that God who desires mercy and not sacrifice. In opposition to such views, I will endeavour to show that the Sabbath is a great temporal blessing, and that man's worldly interests cannot be more seriously injured than by weakening respect for its claims. To establish this point, I remark—

I. *That our celestial and terrestrial interests are indissolubly related, and that in advancing the former the Sabbath advances both.*—If we turn from our own employments and pleasures on the Lord's-day to read the Scriptures or hear them expounded, what are the exhortations addressed to us? We are counselled to be sober, chaste, upright, diligent—to cherish, in other words, those principles and habits by which virtuous persons elevate themselves in society; by which ruinous follies are avoided, and confidence in us is established, and influential observers are favourably disposed towards us, and our progress to useful and honourable station is in many ways expedited. There are exceptions, no doubt, to the immediate secular advantage of faithful compliance with scriptural requirement, but many of these supposed exceptions would be found, if scrutinised, to be more apparent than real; and no general truth is better established than the fact, that godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life which now is, as well as that which is to come.

The frame of mind which a sacred observance of the Sabbath sustains, is itself a valuable antidote to worldly griefs, while it enhances the satisfaction of all innocent gratifications. A vast proportion of the

human race are so painfully situated in their relation to time, that if they look to their temporal lot only, it is difficult to imagine what cheering view of it they can discover. A prospect of toil, irksome in itself, mollified by few comforts, aggravated by many hardships, and terminating only in the grave, fills the vista of their terrestrial futurity. When these persons believe in God, and hail, as their inheritance, the salvation of His Son, all things are then changed to them, and all things become new. The smallest mercies become great when the blood of Christ is believed to have bought them, and the blessing from on high enriches them. The heaviest afflictions become supportable when they are seen to be commissioned in love, and are known, with all their severity and duration, to be light and momentary compared with the eternal weight of glory to which they are subordinate. The man who emanates from the house of God, or the more secret devotions of His sacred day, filled with such thoughts and animated by such hopes, is superior to encircling and assailing vicissitudes. He perishes not in his afflictions, because the law of God is his delight; he faints not under present discouragements, because he hopes to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. And though death should intercept the fulfilment of these pleasing anticipations, he trusts that the loss will be infinitely transcended by accompanying gain, and that, when absent from the body, he will be present with the Lord.

II. *The Sabbath is a great temporal blessing when viewed as a day of rest.*—In this aspect the subject has relation mainly to the working classes: I say *mainly*, and not *exclusively*, because many who have not manual have yet mental toil, and the spirit needs repose as well as the body. Anxious thoughts produce ruinous exhaustion; and nothing is so well fitted as the Sabbath, rightly observed, to withdraw the mind from worldly disquietudes, and to suspend the pressure of its wasting cares. Still the term *rest*

points primarily to a cessation from bodily toil, and shows that the Sabbath breathes special sympathy for the labouring man. This is a pleasing view of its character. The classes whose hands minister to their necessities form the great bulk of society. A beneficent measure which does not reach them deals only with exceptions, and in essaying to do a good work, stops at the commencement.

The artisan has also a trying lot in comparison with the affluent, and his case, therefore, calls more particularly for merciful consideration. It is true that a proportion of servants are well off. They have like shelter, like fare, like comfortable clothing as their masters and mistresses; and all their service involves little more effort than amounts to healthful exercise. But this is not the condition of all, or of most operatives. Look at the workshops, mills, and manufactories, in which masses of them are congregated; and is it not melancholy to contemplate the spectacle which these in general present? The squalid throngs there immured live for others rather than for themselves, and expand their energies in the production of comforts which they are sparingly to enjoy. Though corporeal employment should not be of an arduous description, and should demand at no time extraordinary effort, there may be trial enough in its monotony, in its cheerless and dreary continuation. A sea without a harbour is an awful conception, and the experience that answers to the figure is a dismaying reality.

It might have been anticipated that the improvement of machinery would have diminished human labour; and some picture to themselves a period when the easy production of sustenance and raiment will redeem time from drudgery, and gain it for the nobler pursuits of literature and religion. But whatever may happen in the future, the improvement of the arts has not enlarged hitherto the leisure of the artisan. It is in barbarous countries we see slothfulness and inaction. Where man is civilised,

competition keeps pace with civilisation, and the increasing tendency is to push commercial enterprise at all hazards, and by all accessible resources, till pleasures, comforts, health, and life are immolated for its sake! In so speaking, I do not prompt the industrious poor to discontent or jealousy. Their hardships would not be lessened, but augmented and embittered by such unworthy passions. I do not stir them up against others, but I plead with others to act humanely by them, and especially to beware of wresting from them that day which God has made their own—which a common nature needs, and a common salvation guarantees—and which no man, however high, can take from another, however mean, without a complex infliction of injustice and cruelty.

Were the amount of gain resulting from Sabbath traffic ever so considerable, it could not justify or extenuate the wickedness of becoming rich at the poor man's expense, and extending the roll of profits by over-tasking his strength and shortening his days. But the policy of such oppression is more than questionable. The time spent in labour is only one element of its efficiency and productiveness. The spirit in which it is gone about, the vitality and buoyancy with which it is prosecuted, are constituents which tell not less powerfully on the magnitude of its effects. But secular toil cannot have such qualities, if prolonged without intermission. The constitution of our nature rebels against such unreasonable bondage; and however lures and threats may be plied to quicken a fagging diligence, no efforts of the employer, no, nor of the employed themselves, can so defeat the purposes of God as to extract from human flesh and bones a ceaselessness of gainful service which they were not intended to afford. Despite of all arts and impulses, action, when so protracted, loses its spring. Perpetual luxury palls on the taste; how much more a perpetual vassalage! Our nature loathes it, and languishes over it; and the hand is pithless when the heart is sick.

It is of high consequence to masters to obtain servants of good principles and conduct, as well as expert in their calling. But constant toil is no less degrading and vitiating than dispiriting in its tendency. The mechanic who is bound to his machine, who moves only with its movements, and cannot open his eyes but it is always present to him, as if it were a part of himself, becomes mean in his own estimation. He loses, and must lose, self-respect. His materialised conceptions hardly admit the belief of a God, or they generate the impression that God has made him in vain. He takes a low view of his destiny; and, if we think inadequately of our destiny, we think inadequately of its duties. A high-toned morality withers in such impoverished soil; and they who place it there, and still look for its fruits, can reap only a harvest of disappointment from their own tyranny and folly. You leave no room for devotion—you discourage it with all your might—and you expect that when God is not served, you will get the service denied him. Insane supposition! In destroying fidelity to God, you demolish the buttress on which faithfulness to you rested; and when God is not feared, neither will man be regarded. Besides, the pursuit of happiness is inseparable from our nature. If denied the more pure and ennobling enjoyments, man will lay hold on such gratifications as he can find, and will yield himself to the domination of mischievous indulgences. When the pure and salutary delights of the Sabbath have been withdrawn, an equivalent for them will be sought in such enjoyments as drinking, and lewdness, and nocturnal revelry afforded. How are servants so corrupted to be trusted with interests the most important, and have the lives of their fellow-men committed to their keeping? Most justly did one of the directors of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway observe—"If we give them the Sabbath, we shall have the choice of servants. If we do not, we must lose the services of those who would

be most valuable to the company, and who would best secure the safety and comfort of the public."

When workmen are compelled to labour on the Sabbath, they are in extreme danger, whether others suffer by them or not, of becoming victims themselves. The parties who have made them immoral will not, beyond a certain point, bear with their immoralities. When their faults have been now and again detected and reproved, they will be turned off, and others will be put into their room, to be subjected to the same influences. The ejected operative disappears. His habits exclude him from every desirable post, or deprive him of it so soon as it is obtained. He makes attempts to save himself from falling, but his unsteady hand cannot hold what it grasps; and still he descends in society till he reaches its depths—melancholy depths—where industry is abandoned, and comfort is unknown, and hope itself hardly sheds a cheering ray to relieve the gloom of misconduct, and despair. The case, though suppositious, is too often verified. Let the operative be admonished of his peril. Let him be assured that, if the moral element be eradicated from his constitution, he is irretrievably undone; and that, when he lives in habitual rebellion against his conscience, or even ceases to cultivate its sensibility and tenderness, he has entered on a course of which the end is destruction.

A principal antidote to these evils of grasping and aggressive worldings is the Sabbath—the seventh-day rest—the abiding jubilee—the memorial of a paradise that is past, and earnest of a better yet to come. Thrice happy day! It benefits the servant and wrongs not the master. It suspends the denunciation—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread;" and having existed before the curse, replaces for the time its thorns and briers by a benignant blessing. On this day the sun arises with healing under his wings, and drooping energies revive at his approach. The servant is

this day his own master; or, better still, is the Lord's freeman, and every comfort is enhanced and sweetened by the consciousness of liberty. By this day earth is distinguished from hell where there is no Sabbath, and assimilated to heaven where all is Sabbath; and if we only regard it with an eye of faith, we shall discern in the gift an image of the giver, and find its transient privileges gilded by the beams of an unextinguishable glory. I may be accused of exaggeration, and may be pointed to necessary service as invalidating my argument. But the needful exceptions to Sabbatical rest are few in number, and instead of unsettling, they only establish the rule. The Sabbath, after all proper deductions from its quiet have been conceded, is a mighty boon, worthy of a Divine munificence; and all that mere philanthropy ever accomplished for mankind, is diminutive and insignificant beside this merciful provision for the happiness of our species. None but God would have given it—none but God has given it. The charter is written in the King's name and sealed with the King's ring, and all who receive it receive in it a melting assurance that he knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust.

III. *The Sabbath is a great temporal blessing, as favouring a cultivation of the proprieties of life.*—One of the most important and palpable of these is *cleanliness*. If any imagine that this is a secondary matter, and very remote from morality, they are greatly mistaken. Let them explore the lanes and hovels of a crowded city, and they will find decency and well-doing, filth and profligacy, most intimately associated. Nature itself teaches the irrational animals to wipe off pollutions from themselves and their young. The leopard's skin and the eagle's feathers owe not a little of their lustre to careful purification. You meet occasionally with such creatures in a neglected and dirty condition; but it is when they are enslaved and diseased; when the

energy that bore them to the heights of the sky, or the extremities of the forest, is paralysed and defunct; and they have become a fitting symbol of man denuded of his rights, riveted to servitude, and lost to all sense of decency and shame.

The respite of a few hours each day is of great consequence in securing personal and domestic order. But when the season is brief, and in close connexion with toil, the temptations are great to let slip its advantages. How great is the difference in favour of the Sabbath—an entire day—a day on which the emancipated tradesman quits his cell, and walks the streets, and exposes himself in the light of the sun to general observation! When he goes to church, the inducement is still stronger to do honour to the place, to the assembly, and to himself, by suitable outward preparations.

It would be easy to enumerate many civilities and courtesies which enter into the amelioration and elevation of society, and which a stated day of rest is admirably calculated to promote. I remark on this topic with the more satisfaction, that numbers who plume themselves on politeness, seem to confound religion and vulgarity, as if good manners were created and upheld by affluence and station; whereas the usages called fashions are capricious and worthless, extending at best to a limited circle; and we are indebted to a Divine religion, and specially to the Divine institution of the Sabbath, for smoothing down, in all classes, the asperities of our nature, and comprehending the hamlet as well as the palace within the amenities of life.

IV. *The Sabbath is a great temporal blessing, as it aids natural affection and domestic fellowship.*—This topic will be discussed separately, in a subsequent essay, by an esteemed and able minister; and I therefore content myself with the shortest paragraph on it that may complete the view of my argument. On week-days the members of industrious families are, in many instances, dissociated by their diversified

employments. One labours in the house, another out of doors; one is cutting wood, another chiselling stone; and a third is melting metals. If all days were work-days, these relations would never meet, or only momentarily, and then amid such haste and bustle, or exhaustion and drowsiness, as to divest communion of its ease, sprightliness, and charms. The Sabbath is the day of happy salutation; the day on which the father holds converse with his son, and the brother with his sister. Nor is the interchange of their sympathies suspended or impaired when they go to the house of God in company, and lift up united devotions to a throne of grace, in the hope of at last meeting never to part in the realms of glory!

It remains that I briefly apply the preceding argument to the much-agitated question of Sabbath railway trains. Some advocate the running of these trains on grounds hostile to the observance and the very existence of the Lord's-day; but others place the defence of the same measure on a different footing. They own the Divine appointment and obligations of the Sabbath, and contend that railway travelling on this day is allowable, as pertaining to works of necessity and mercy. They insist that such means of transit are especially important for the working classes, and ought to be upheld, were it only on their account. The operative who, during the week, is immured in dust and smoke, seats himself on the Sunday morning in a good carriage at a small fare, and is swiftly borne from rubbish and chimneys to green fields, sparkling rivers, waving forests, where the sun shining brightly above him, and the breeze blowing feebly around him, and the charms of nature spread before him in magnificent prospect, elevate his depressed spirits, invigorate his debilitated frame, dissipate a remembrance of past woes, and embolden him for manly conflict with future adversities. Nor is the traveller necessarily excluded from the house of God. By this magical conveyance he may be transported from shore to

shore, find leisure for exploring the distant region he has reached, and yet attend with scrupulous punctuality on the stated services of Divine worship. Such is the plea most plausibly urged for Sabbath trains; and it should be confessed, in candour, that the character of not a few who advance such reasoning is sufficient guarantee for their sincerity, and should secure to them full credit for benevolent intentions. I bespeak their patient and ingenuous attention while I state my reasons for not acquiescing in their conclusions.

Such pleas as I have noticed for travelling on Sabbath seem to overlook the hallowed character of the day, and to set at nought its Divine appointment and indestructible obligations. They suppose it to be rather a season of amusement, which a person may spend in any way he considers most agreeable. The possibility of associating pleasure-trips with religious services is no doubt asserted; but the assertion carries with it no conviction of fitness or likelihood. If throngs are carried away from their own neighbourhood and its places of worship, and cast upon strange towns and countrysides, how can it be imagined that they will commonly abridge their sights and rambles to attend the house of God? The alleged practicability of so connecting piety and recreation may so far lull scruples of conscience as to induce multitudes to make the experiment; but rarely will it avail to make that experiment successful. We are reminded, however, that the gin-shop is left behind, and that it is better to inhale the pure air than to drink ardent spirits. True: but the gin shops are not confined to towns—they are to be met with in the village or the glen, as well as in the city; and many who have no temptation to frequent them at home, may be lured into them at a distance by the plausible excuse of needing refreshments. There the young, mingling with companions as idle and giddy as themselves, are not so favourably situated for learning the lessons of morality, or improving their relish for true enjoyment, as for

initiating themselves in the usages of dissipation, and beginning a course of folly and ruin. Pause before you advocate such a system in the name of philanthropy! Look into the annals of society, and judge from experience whether it may not terminate in results alike deplorable and irremediable—in guilty woes, which cannot be obliterated by the bitter tears of parental disappointment, or the more terrible horrors of personal remorse!

Should present pleasure, however, be insisted on as the sole test of beneficent tendency, let it be observed that, when working men are conveyed by railway trains, it is to the injury of other working men, who are thus deprived of a day of rest. The kind-hearted gentlemen who demand recreation for operatives seem to overlook this circumstance. If these benefactors were themselves to replace porters, stokers, engineers, and station-men, and to give effect personally to their beneficent designs, I could understand and appreciate their disinterestedness. But if they simply compel one labourer to toil for another labourer's pleasure, the philanthropy of such a proceeding is not so very evident. Read the following memorial, presented to the directors of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway by the servants of the company, and say whether mercy lie on the side of granting or rejecting its prayer:—

"The memorial of the undersigned servants of the company humbly showeth, that your memorialists consist of persons engaged in various employments in the service of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company: that these employments are more or less severe and protracted; but in all, extending to such hours as make the rest of the Sabbath-day a boon of no ordinary magnitude; and though many of them, from circumstances which it is unnecessary to specify, may be constrained to submit to a partial interference with its privileges and enjoyments, yet their labour on that day is reluctantly yielded, and is by no means satisfactory to their own minds, or conducive to their religious, moral, or intellectual wellbeing and

improvement; but, on the contrary, is attended with serious evils in all these respects.

"Without entering into any discussion of the many most important and interesting questions, both religious and economical, involved in the subject of the running of trains on the Lord's-day, your memorialists desire to approach your honourable board with an humble but heartfelt expression of gratitude for the relief they have experienced by the resolution you have recently passed, to stop the running of passenger-trains on the Lord's-day, and of their humble but most earnest hope, that by this resolution you will be able to abide.

"They fondly trust that the public will not encourage any attempt to have this resolution rescinded, and will remember that God has given to every man the right of enjoying the day of sacred rest unbroken, to attend to his own highest interests as an immortal being, and those of his family, his dependents, and connexions.

"Your memorialists would conclude by an humble and respectful expression of their confident opinion, that by adhering to the resolution to which the honourable the board of directors have recently come, they shall find that neither shall the company be less faithfully served, their general interests less anxiously and securely promoted, nor their true interests and lawful convenience of the public in the smallest degree injured.

"For these reasons, and for many others which your memorialists forbear to urge, they venture to renew the expression of their earnest desire and hope, that the prayer of this memorial may be granted."—Signed by 57.*

It may be said, perhaps, that the workmen on railways lose only a part of the Sabbath, and have full opportunity to go to church. Although it were so, we have seen that a whole day of rest has distinguish-

* It has been alleged in some quarters, that the servants of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company, in consequence of getting the Sabbath to themselves, are more severely tasked on other days. I am able, on authority, to contradict the assertion.

ing advantages which detached portions of a day cannot possibly possess. This consideration should have the more force in regard to a class of operatives who have not the holidays granted to others, but are most occupied and over-wrought in these very seasons of amusement. A humane railway director, already referred to, observed with equal truth and feeling, "Unless you give these servants the Sabbath, they have no rest at all, no respite whatever from secular employment. Others have holidays, they have none; and shall we make our employment such a cruel bondage to them?" It is not easy to imagine how a benevolent heart can withstand such reasoning. Add to all this, that the operatives have less work on Sunday only on some lines of railway, and that when a system of oppression is once introduced, no one can say how far it may be carried. A very considerable section of railway labourers are already subjected to its utmost rigour.

But the workmen of this class are few in all, we have been told, and may therefore be warrantably and benevolently "sacrificed" to the general good. They are not so few as this humane argument supposes. The Government requires the Railway Company to carry the mail between Edinburgh and Glasgow on Sabbath, and six men are sufficient for that service; but when passenger trains accompanied the mail, a hundred men were employed upon the line. It appears from "Bradshaw's Guide" that eight hundred and fifty trains run upon the English lines of railway on Sabbath; and if we suppose ten men to be required at an average for each of these trains, then from eight to nine thousand men are thus occupied. When we are told, therefore, that Sunday trains are vehicles of pleasure to working men, the statement must be received with a large deduction. We must remember that there are thousands of operatives to whom the allegation is inapplicable, and that not only are these thousands deprived of the pleasure, but are compelled to fur-

nish that pleasure by secular service. Even this representation of the facts falls far short of the truth. Railways bring innumerable vehicles into requisition on cross-roads and at stations. Steam-carriages have a connexion, too, with steamboats, and if the former run, the latter will sail. The supply of inns, porters, &c., must be in proportion to the amount of travelling, and a general system of traffic on the Lord's-day appears, in such circumstances, to be almost inevitable. It will be very disastrous if this issue comes to be lamented when it can no longer be rectified, and still more deplorable if it sear us to its evils, and grow so familiar to observation as to be looked upon with indifference.

But grant that railway labourers form a small proportion of the community, is their paucity of numbers any sufficient reason for disregarding their claims? When some shareholders of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway expressed a purpose to vote against Sabbath trains, in deference to the general feeling in Scotland, they were vehemently told, in some of our leading journals, that the question was not one of numbers; and that, though the parties disposed to travel on Sabbath were the smallest fraction of society, they should have the means of keeping the Sabbath as they think proper. If the argument be sound, give the railway operatives the benefit of it. Whether they be few or many, allow them to keep the Sabbath as they think proper; and if this sufferance be extended to them, the question of Sunday railway travelling will be practically settled.

But the opponents of Sabbath trains are guilty, we are assured, of flagrant inconsistencies. Some of them drive their private carriages on the Sabbath; others come to church in cabs, and thus exclude the poor cab-drivers from public worship. Others eat their rich dinners on the Lord's-day, and thus keep servants employed in cooking their dainties and waiting at their tables. I shall not spend time in drawing distinctions between these

alleged profanations of the Sabbath, and the case of railway travelling and traffic. I admit at once that, independently of railways, the rest of the Sabbath is in many ways, and most seriously, infringed. If the evil were examined into as it should be, its amount would be found to be enormous. But concede the worst that can be alleged or imagined—concede that servants are variously as well as vexatiously toiled and enthralled on the day of rest and liberty, and that a large share of this wrong is inflicted by the opponents of Sunday trains—what follows? That the inconsistent advocates of the Sabbath should be exposed or punished? This conclusion would have some aspect of legitimacy. But the inconsistencies alleged are introduced for a totally different purpose—to load the parties injured with accumulated injury. The argument, as it affects the working classes, amounts to this—They have much work as it is on the Sabbath; therefore, give them more of it, and harder. Their season of repose is molested in various ways already; therefore, make a present of it wholly to the gay and the sordid, and let it from this time be trampled into a thoroughfare. Their yoke is even now heavy; then make it heavier. They have been hitherto chastised with whips; henceforth chastise them with scorpions!

But a sufficient confutation of all such reasoning is found, to the satisfaction of many, in the plea of necessity and mercy. It may be of great consequence to life or happiness, that individuals be furnished with the means of travelling on the first day, as on other days of the week. How important is the speedy arrival of a friend, and still more of a physician, in the abode of sudden and dangerous sickness! The claims of such cases are allowed at once to be strong; if they formed the sole element of judgment, Sunday trains would be justifiable. But we must not dispense occasional mercy through wholesale cruelty. If a regiment of soldiers, falling into a dangerous position, were on the point of being cut down by the enemy,

and a commander-in-chief, on being implored to send them succour, were to decline doing so, on the ground that more lives would be lost than saved by the measure recommended, it would be wrong to charge barbarity on such a refusal. The presiding officer would follow the dictates of humanity, as well as sound judgment, in concluding that the less deadly alternative was the more necessary and merciful. Let there be a like balancing of conflicting claims in the case of Sabbath trains, and surely all the supposable cases of urgent convenience are not to be weighed against the certain injury inflicted on thousands who serve on the railway, and on tens of thousands whom it subjects indirectly to service, and on the hundreds of thousands who are thus lured to the scenes of gaiety and dissipation, and on the religion of the kingdom at large, by the great and growing desecration of a day, of which the keeping is essential to piety and morals. It will be a poor exercise of charity, if we accommodate a few by oppressing or corrupting millions!

Various attempts have been made to enlist the working classes in the cause of Sunday trains. Most simple indeed would the mechanic be if he responded to such calls; for in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. Appeals of the kind are about as insulting to his intelligence as they are menacing to his rights. These counsels have signally failed to accomplish their object. The working classes have not moved, and never will move, in behalf of Sabbath-day labour. They know that every species of toil is related more or less directly to every other; and that the weapon forged and wielded by a section of their number to wrest the Sabbath from another section, would prove speedily as fatal to the spoilers as to the spoiled. The policy of the Romans was to conquer by dividing. When they invaded a country, they tempted one portion of the inhabitants to help them in subjugating the rest: the result was, that the entire population was brought under their yoke. The advocates of Sabbath labour follow the same course, enticing

operatives in mills and other establishments to aid them in forcing toil on railway servants; and soon the labourers who consent to be the tools of oppression will become its prey. The safety of the working classes lies in their being true to each other, and in presenting a united resistance to all invasion of their privileges. They would resist the plundering of their abodes. Will they tamely endure a far more destructive robbing of their rights? Will they see their own day—their only day—a day that brightens all days—a day important alike to their present comfort and eternal prospects—wrenched from one portion of servants after another, till hardly any of them are left with hands unshackled to help their fellows? Instead of aiding to oppress each other, will they not confederate their energies to defeat oppression, from whatever quarter it may proceed? They have such an opportunity now of securing the Sabbath for themselves as has not occurred before, and if carelessly suffered to pass, may not occur again. It is no easy matter to arouse public interest on such a question, and create a general stand for benefits that have been captured in detail—no easy matter to associate influential persons of all sects and classes, on behalf of "the cause of the afflicted, and the rights of the poor." The rare opportunity presents itself at present. Our artificers have now many with them who are both able and willing to help them, if they will only help themselves. Arise, enlightened workmen, and show a just estimate of the crisis and its duties. Claim the rest of the Sabbath, and no power in these realms can withhold it from you; defend it when it is won; and, all unsheltered as it appears, it will find in your zeal and courage, sanctioned and blessed of God, a munition of rocks. Though kings should encamp against it, it will be to their own confusion and disgrace: they will pass by together, and haste them away before the walls and bulwarks of such an impregnable fortress!

V.

THE ADAPTATION OF THE SABBATH TO MAN'S INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL NATURE.

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON,

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LONDON.

"The Lord is risen indeed! And this is the day which he has made! He has made it for me to rejoice and be glad. And so I shall. Last night I was fagged and weary; to-day I shall rest and be refreshed. Last week, the long day was toil and hurry, and the jaded evening I gave to neighbours and the news. I fear that God was seldom in my thoughts, and the great realities were distant and very dim. But this is the Sabbath-day. Lord, help me to deep it holy. O fill it with Thyself, and make it a foretaste of heaven!"

So mused a Christian tradesman, as he woke up to a Lord's-day morning; and in a few minutes he was ready for its endeared engagements. His closet had double doors that morning. No knock of secular importunity startled its tranquillity; and it was with a delighted sense of leisure that its occupant entered on its exercises. He felt that he had time for everything. He had time to think of the past—its progress and its shortcomings; and time to forecast the future—its dangers and its exigencies. And he had time to pray. Often on other days he grieved at stinted devotions, and went feebly through his work, from a fear that prayer had been stinted or restrained. But this morning he had leisure for full and deliberate supplication; and, besides laying all his remembered wants and sins before his Heavenly Father, he was enabled to intercede with

affectionate fervour for many dear to him. And whilst he was thus employed, those friends began to assume a new aspect in his eyes. One had not used him well, and to another he himself had acted very ill; whilst many of them he had scanned with the hard and knowing eye of worldliness, or had raised a laugh against them by rehearsing their foibles and failings. But viewed beneath the mercy-seat, a sacred light shone over them; and he rose wondering at his wealth of friendship, and brimming with that benevolence which makes those better whom it loves; full of forgiveness, and resolved to make amends to his injured brother. And he had time to read the Word of God. Often had he been obliged to hurry out to business after a flying glance, a random snatch; but this morning he was able to peruse an entire Epistle. He was astonished at the insight afforded by reading the whole continuously; and, riveted by the parallel passages, he fastened many interesting particulars in his memory; and having thus marked and inwardly digested it, he rose from his lesson with a pleasant consciousness of enlarged intelligence, and with the invigoration of one in whom the Word of Christ dwells richly.

From this retirement he carried earnestness into his family worship, and a more outspoken affection marked the intercourse of the little breakfast party. It was the only morning when Harry, the young engineer, shared that meal with his brothers and sisters: for every working-day he spent the whole round of the clock at a distant foundry. And, to tell the truth, he was no great loser by his absence; for the morning repast was seldom distinguished for its flow of soul. Little Wat would be smuggling his Latin rudiments under the table, and refreshing his memory with Gerunds and Supines, whilst his father glanced perpetually at the silver watch, standing sentry beside the saltcellar, and at every tinkle of the shop-bell started nervously; and then some voice would be heard beneath, and pushing away the

scalding cup, jerking the watch into the fob, and darting past his daughter, who had gone to express the toast upstairs, Mr. T. was forthwith bowing behind the counter, whilst Mrs. T. and her daughter mournfully finished the interrupted meal. But this morning the shop-bell was silent; the fidgety watch lay still in the fob; and Wat's rudiments slept in the satchel. It was not only the quiet in the streets; it was not only the fresh faces and the Sunday attire; it was not only the piano closed, and the work-table locked, and the pamphlets and newspapers put away, which announced the Sabbath come again; but it was the look of home and leisure which lit up the little parlour. The sun came clearer than usual through the casement, for yesterday the windows were cleaned. The fire burned more brightly, for happier eyes were around it. And the old cat, who in her kitten days had been Harry's playmate—an old cat now, for Harry was a baby then—the old cat felt the atmosphere domestic, and preferred the carpet-stool at the fender to her usual dormitory down in the kitchen. And though not very much was said, a great deal was seen and felt. Repose, affection, and a sacred calm filled the chamber, and the peace of God was keeping their hearts and minds.

The bells were ringing. Harry and his sister walked on to church together. Harry was now something more than a schoolboy, and so did not feel it unmanly to walk to church with his sister. And she was older than he, and sedate, and gentle; and, far better, she was a humble and earnest follower of the blessed Saviour. She was full of hope about her brother, and was this morning trying to persuade him to become her fellow-teacher in the Sabbath-school. Their father and mother came after, and Wat, with his new Bible, had charge of little Benjamin. When they had taken possession of their pew—and they nearly filled it—there were still some minutes to the hour. The father sat at

the lower end of the seat, and his Bible was open before him. He read the 128th Psalm. "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house; thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord." And when the service began, it was a full heart which accompanied the prayers, and an exulting voice which swelled the psalms. That morning a distinguished stranger preached. The sermon was one long and lofty argument. Mrs. T. and the young people scarcely understood it. To the close attention and vigorous intellect of Mr. T. it was a transcendent treat. On the way home, his wife and daughter complained that they could not follow it. "It wanted stepping-stones. I know what he wished to prove, but I could not see how he made it out." "If there be a boat to the other side, you don't need stepping-stones. Do you remember the curious ferry which we crossed last summer? There was a rope hung over, and the gunwale of the boat was fastened to it. The rope dipped under the current, but it rose as the boat moved on, and that rope and the rush of the river were enough of themselves to carry us across. The sermon to-day had no stepping-stones, but the text and the landing-place were joined together by one strong line; and if you did not see the full drift of it, that was only because the rope dipped under the river." And so the rest of the way he repeated the leading thoughts of the preacher, and brought them to the landing-place in their own style—by the easy stepping-stones.

However, they were all glad when their own minister entered the pulpit in the afternoon. A smile of recognition rose to the frank and open features of Mrs. T., and even little Benjamin felt that all was right, and whispered, "Mamma, that's

Mr. ——." Wat was all attention; for he was sure there would be some story or something else which he could repeat on going home; and Emily, who had already written out some volumes of sermon notes, had her nimble pencil ready. Harry was a zealot for his minister, and stood up for him as the best preacher in all the town; and though Mr. T. would sometimes have liked a little more system, or a somewhat closer exposition of Scripture, or a style of preaching more experimental, he felt gratitude and respect to a pastor whom his family loved, and was often impressed by his glowing earnestness. That afternoon the text was, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." And on the way home, Harry whispered to his sister, "Emily, I'll come and see your Sabbath class this evening."

Mr. T. had a little cabinet with glazed doors, which he called his Sabbath library. There was a row of books for the younger folks, from little Benjamin's "Peep of Day" up to the "Pilgrim's Progress," and the "Fairchild family," and Todd's "Lectures," and Abbot's "Young Christian," and Janeway's "Token," and the "Night of Toil." and the Lives of Eliot and Martyn, and Mrs. Judson. And there was an old ancestral copy of Henry's "Commentary," still wearing its snuff-brown coat, just as it used to do when grandmamma read till dusk, and put in for a marker, not her spectacles, but their round wooden case. And there were Fox's "Martyrs," and Flavel's Works, and Thomas Boston's—tall folios, which could not stand upright, and could not stoop, and were therefore laid upon their sides. And there was many a less bulky volume, which bore the hallowed names of Owen, and Baxter, and Charnock, and Leighton, and Doddridge—names which it was solemn to look at. And on Sabbath evenings, when the sermons were repeated, and the hymns were said, and tea was over, this cabinet was opened, and one of its old worthies was brought down to edify the quiet hour. This evening the

young people were all at the Sabbath-school, and Mr. T. had wheeled in the easy-chair, and was sitting with Cardiphonia open before him, but as Mrs. T. noticed, without ever turning the leaf. At last he said, "Mary, I was thinking how good God has been to us. I trust it is long since, through grace, we ourselves were led to choose the better part; and now the Lord seems to be saying, 'I will be a God unto you and your seed after you.' I hope we may always be able to seek for them and for ourselves first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness; for I feel to-night that if we really seek them, our heavenly Father will give the best gifts to ourselves and our children. Dear Mary, goodness and mercy are following us. The Lord is our shepherd, and I feel to-night as if after this I could be careful for nothing. Oh, but he is a gracious God!" The tear was in his eye. His wife told him how Emily had taken in hand the country girl who had lately come to be their servant, and what progress her poor scholar had made in reading her Bible, and was going on to fill his overflowing heart still fuller, when Benjamin's tug at the bell announced the return of the party. The news of the Sabbath-school were told—the best being that Harry had given in his name as a teacher; and Hannah was called up to evening worship, and they sang—

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ;
Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
That tastes these gifts with joy.

Through ev'ry period of my life
Thy goodness I'll proclaim;
And after death, in distant worlds,
Resume the glorious theme.

Through all eternity to thee
A joyful song I'll raise;
For, oh! eternity's too short
To utter all thy praise.

Next morning Harry was early afoot. The road to the foundry lay through dingy lanes and miry

streets, but that morning Harry had prayed more fervently than usual. The words, "This is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," had got into his mind, and he could not help saying them over and over again. A springy freshness mantled over the houses—a spring which none else noticed, for the singing-bird in his own bosom made it; and when Harry reached the forge he felt fresh as a lark and strong as a lion. Some of his comrades had arranged a pleasure-party for the bygone Sunday; but their bleared eyes and earnest yawning, the vengeful way in which they jangled bars of iron, and cursed their tools, and jostled one another, were the only relics of the pleasure which survived on Monday morning. And, sooner up than usual, Harry's father got calmly through the morning worship, and breakfast being early ended, he was down in the shop betimes, and he could not help noticing to himself the readiness and recollectedness with which he got through everything that day. Indeed, had you seen the dexterity with which he served two customers at once, and the happy knack with which he fitted every taste, and the deft felicity with which he laid his hand on the very article wanted, and the agility with which he climbed the ladder, and actually vaulted over the counter, and the transfusive good humour which sent every one away with a purpose to come back, you might have thought that Mr. T., who had fully reached the middle age, had got a dip in the magic fountain which used to make old men young. And so he had. Yesterday he had renewed his youth, and he did it every week. And, reader, so may you; for the magic fountain is a Sabbath sanctified.

The reason why the Sabbath exercises such restorative influence on its observers is, because it is adapted to the physical and moral constitution of man. The same wise Being who made ourselves, made the day of rest. God made the Sabbath for man; and though the right motive for keeping it is simply the will of

God, yet, like all the other commands of God—like chastity, temperance, honesty—we shall find Sabbath observance good for ourselves. Referring for its temporal and social benefits to other treatises, I would notice very briefly a few of its intellectual and moral advantages to the individual who keeps it holy.

Most likely the reader is engaged in handicraft, or some one or other of those many callings which absorb the physical energies, and leave little time for mental culture. Toiling at the forge or in the factory, in the shop or in the field, with the needle or the mallet, with the spindle or the spade, you often feel as if your soul would shrivel up, and leave you a mere muscular machine. And, to aggravate the evil, you have perhaps got into that whirlpool of competition in which our British industry is spinning round. You live in a hurry; you feel as if every half-crown was a windfall, and the daily loaf could only be snatched by a scramble. Whatever wit and whatever strength you possess, are all needed to earn a subsistence, and practically you are in danger of devoting your life to the problem, "What shall I eat, and what shall I drink?" You are in danger of forgetting your nobler nature altogether, and subsiding towards the level of those lower creatures or gross materialisms in the midst of which you fret and moil. But against this brutifying process the great safeguard is a sanctified Sabbath. From the din of competition and the dust of secularity, it is a calm asylum; and to the mind which was growing torpid it is a brisk restorative. It breaks the eagle's chain, and sends it up again to its native sky. It gives freedom to cramped or imprisoned faculties, and encourages the thoughts to attempt their loftiest flight. "Here, on this day of rest, the soul may receive those impressions of Divine truth which fashion it, by God's blessing, to a sublimer mould of moral beauty. Here the mind—which has been denied the advantage of early culture, or which, by the stern necessity of nature's first law, is obliged to think throughout the

six days on one theme, and that not calculated to enlarge its capacities—may come and sit at the feet of a Teacher who spake as man never spake; and may weekly learn, from that Divine Teacher's lessons, what man in his collected wisdom could never impart." And in the boundless range of subjects which the Bible and the sanctuary bring before you—"the being of God; the creation of the world; man's origin, his innocence, and his fall; the moral history of our race; the attributes of God; the duties we owe to Him; the nature and consequences of sin; the glorious work of redemption by Jesus Christ; the mystery of the incarnation; the death and resurrection of Christ; the accountability of man, and the day of retribution; the glories of heaven; the obligations of the moral law, embracing all the duties which we owe to our neighbours, as well as those which we owe to God,"* besides the inexhaustible field of sacred biography and history—in such subjects you will find at once a stimulus to your noblest faculties, and the lessons which make wise to everlasting life. But in order to get even the intellectual good of the Sabbath—its full result of mental invigoration—it must be reserved for its own appropriate and exalted exercises. A Sabbath of slumber may refresh the body, or a Sabbath of amusement may lighten the spirits; but it is only a Sabbath of worship and holy resting, which, while it recruits the body and cheers the mind, enhances the intellectual powers, and leaves the observer a wiser and a mightier man.

But, instead of working with their hands, some of our readers may be habitually engaged in mental labour. You conduct an extensive business, or are engrossed with study, or some learned profession, and your mind is its own machine, but a machine incomparably more delicate and precarious than the body. Rough usage will sooner ruin it, and a constant strain will sooner crush it. If you wish to get the full good of your mind, you will give it the rest

* Waterbury's "Book for the Sabbath," pp. 27, 28.

which its Creator indicates: you will give it sleep, and you will give it the Sabbath. The mind is not an Artesian well, but a land-spring. The supply is limited. If you pump continually, the water will grow turbid; and if after it grows turbid you continue still to work it, you will not increase the quantity, and you will spoil the pump. There is a difference of intellectual activity, but the most powerful mind is a land-spring after all; and those who wish to preserve their thoughts fresh, pure, and pellucid, will put on the Sabbath padlock. In the subsequent clearness of their views, in the calmness of their judgment, and in the free and copious flow of ideas, they will find their speedy recompense. Dr. Hope, of London, was an ardent student. When compiling the works which created his fame, there were months together when he never opened a newspaper or an amusing book; but then, in the full flush of his brilliant practice, he contrived to attend church twice a-day, and kept the Sabbath as devoutly as any private Christian. "During this disputed election," says his biographer, "Dr. Hope did not depart from his old principle of observing Sunday. All books and papers were cleared away on Saturday night, and, engrossing as the subject of the election was, it was not permitted to be mentioned in his family. While he was justified by the Scriptures in expecting the Divine blessing on such conduct, the actual relief afforded by this day of rest from agitating and laborious employment was so great, that a similar course might safely be recommended to those who seek no blessings beyond those of this life." Is the reader a student, or a lawyer, or one whose labour is literature? Setting altogether out of view that blessing which attends compliance with a Divine command, and that curse which must sooner or later overtake transgression, recollect that experience, no less than revelation, teaches that the mind requires its Sabbath—a vacancy from toil, or a variety of work; and that to refuse it this periodical

repose, is to violate its constitution and impair its powers.

But we should convey a very erroneous impression if we represented the Sabbath as merely a bodily rest, or a means of mental invigoration. The Sabbath was doubtless made for man—for man the worker, and man the thinker; but much more for man the heir of immortality. In His tender mercy, God has sent us a Gospel—a revelation which not only proffers an endless and blessed life hereafter, but undertakes to prepare us for it. Unhappily, however, the drift of this sinful world is all away from that Gospel; and like weeds on the current, or insects wafted in the bosom of a sunny breeze, we have only to surrender ourselves to the course of this world—we have only to go with the jovial and godless multitude, and a few short years will plunge us in perdition. To get into the knowledge of the Gospel, or the enjoyment of the Christian life, we have need of diligence. We would need to be rescued from the importunate cares, and still more importunate follies, on every side of us, and would need to get into some sequestered retreat, where the voice of Jehovah may be heard, and where the infinite realities may have time to brighten on the view. The Sabbath is that noiseless retreat. It is the day most frequent when the Holy Spirit has revealed the Saviour to the soul. It is the day, more than any other, when the Lord Jesus has said to the weary worlding, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." It is the day when the strait gate has oftenest opened and ushered happy pilgrims on the path of peace. Even the Gospel, without the Sabbath, would have done the world little good; for without the Sabbath the world would never have taken time to attend to the Gospel.

And as it is the day from which most of God's people date their better life, so it is the day which has done the most to forward them in faith, and holiness, and meetness for heaven. In the outset

of their Christian career, it was on these weekly stepping-stones that they were enabled to get over the Slough of Despond—the difficulties, and fears, and misgivings which encountered their entrance on the life of faith: and since that period, along the steep and sultry pilgrimage, many a communion Sabbath, and memorable day of the Son of Man has proved the verdant arbour whence they could view the promised land, and where the willing soul was conscious of a nearer immortality. On the ocean of life, these stated and seasonable days have been to the heavenward voyager as havens of refuge, into which he could escape from the windy storm and the tempest, and, however vexed and sorrow-tossed before, was sure to find a great and sudden calm; and when his faith and love were failing, these blessed days have been like the timely entrepôt, where the famished ship puts in and gets fresh-victualled—the opportune occasion when his fainting spirit laid in a new supply of the bread and water of life. These are the days when the holiest feelings are created or increased, and when the most sacred joys come home. Like those brilliant dyes which our cold and watery atmosphere refuses to bring out, but which we are compelled to send away to purer skies and a less diluted sun, there are many devout emotions and Divine affections which need a Sabbath atmosphere to give them their empyreal tone and heavenly hue; and these have been the days when love to the Saviour, and zeal for God, and good-will to man, the most benevolent feelings, and the most unworldly, have glowed to intensest lustre. And like those birds which sing among the branches, but which the roar of battle scares away, many of our sweetest joys take wing, and quit the din of the daily battle; but to the peace and quiet of these Sabbaths the startled happiness returns—the tender and hallowed love which always hovers over the Christian's home, but only alights on days of leisure—the communion of saints which is in the creed all

the week, but in the heart this day—the hope, and assurance, and joy, which are seldom more remote from a child of God than a Sabbath-day's journey—these often return; and that blessing, comprehensive of every other, the Comforter, returns, and the joyful, thankful believer finds himself "in the Spirit on the Lord's-day."

Dear reader, the God of grace has given you the Sabbath that you yourself may grow fit for glory, and that you may do good to others. It is the day when you may sit down to the Bible without fear of disturbance. It is the day when, with our sinless progenitors, you may take the tour of Paradise, and listen to the anthems of a newly-created world. It is the day when, alongside of Enoch, you may feed the flame of devotion, and try to divine the wonder and imbibe the ardour of a walk with God. It is the day when, according to your various mood, you may mourn with Abraham at Machpelah, or meditate with Isaac in the fields of Mamre, or go down into Egypt to view Joseph in all his glory. It is the day when you may bid Jacob's star twinkle anew, and Zechariah's fountain flow amain. It is the day when you may fill your ear with draughts of melody from David's sounding lyre, or let your spirit ride aloft on Ezekiel's flying wheels. It is the day when you may take a pleasant walk to Bethany, or Emmaus, or, a fourth disciple, ascend Tabor with Peter, and James, and John. It is the day when, with Mary, you may clasp that cross which quivers no longer, and look up to those pale and painless lips which need never repeat, "It is finished," and gaze on that countenance in death so Divine, and beneath its thorny crown so blissful and so benign, till it says to you, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven." It is the day when, in the upper chamber, you may listen to a sermon of Paul; or, a pilgrim to Patmos along with the beloved disciple, see Jesus again. And it is the day for prayer—the Sabbath itself one closet, and your quiet chamber

another—a closet within a closet, when you may surely shut out the world and get very near to God; the day for looking back, for confession, for eyeing the Lamb that was slain; the day for looking forward, for self-dedication, for holy resolutions, for obedience begun anew. And it is the day for public worship, when the glad bells say, Go ye up to the house of the Lord, and the willing worshipper answers, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. And it is the day for Christian converse; when, coming from the house of God in company, pious friends take counsel one with another; and when, under the quiet roof, they read or go over the sermons, or commune together. And it is the day for family instruction, when the hymns are said, and the chapters read, and the truth in Jesus expounded; and when fatherly affection strives to leave the lessons of heavenly wisdom imbedded in filial love. It is the day for the Sabbath-school, and the prayer-meeting, and the visit of mercy. It is the day when, so that you do not exhaust yourself or overtask others, you may give every moment to the one thing needful; the day which is best employed when the soul gets all, and heaven gets all, and God gets all.

Oh, what a happy world it would be, did it but reciprocate the Creator's kind design, and suffer itself to be as happy as the Gospel and the Sabbath are fit to make it! Reader, be not you one of those who resist or neglect God's merciful provision for your own welfare. If conscious that hitherto you have not kept the Sabbath as you should, begin anew. Repentant for the past, enter, through the Saviour, into the peace of a reconciled God, and accept as a sign betwixt you and him this olive branch which he sends you, the gift of the Sabbath. For the sake of a peaceful conscience, for the sake of a prosperous week, for the sake of a happy home, for the sake of an approving God, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy;" and you will shortly prove the truth of the promise, "If thou turn away thy foot from

the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

VI.

SEVERAL PREVAILING FORMS OF SABBATH DESECRATION EXPOSED.*

BY THE REV. PETER M'OWAN,

MOUNT PLEASANT CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL.

WHILST the institution of the Sabbath is a fence to the general interests of religion, and a bulwark thrown up to repress the floods of ungodliness, it also operates as a moral and religious test to the children of men; discovering either their love or their hatred, their loyalty or their rooted enmity to Jehovah, their sovereign Lord. In proportion as nations, churches, or individuals, rise in the scale of religion and morality, they venerate and religiously improve this holy day; and in the same degree as they decline from the love of God, and the belief of His truth, they despise and profane it. The righteous call it "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable;" and they honour him, not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words. But the ungodly say, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?"

Some boldly deny its moral obligation; affirming that it originated in state policy or in priestcraft; or that it is, at best, a fragment of the Jewish economy. Others admit its Divine origin, and concede that its design is humane and wise; but, on the plea of public utility, infirm health, or the

* Some portions of this essay have been extracted from a small work previously published by the writer, and entitled, "PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH."

heavy stake they have in the trade and commerce of the country, they pervert it, more or less, to purposes of secular toil or of worldly pleasure. The proud profane it, because it encroaches on their fancied independence; the avaricious, because it limits their opportunities of amassing wealth; the lovers of pleasure, because it interferes with the gratification of their lusts; the undevout, because of the spirituality of its duties and design: and the unbelieving, because it assumes the being of a God, the existence of providence, the responsibility of man, and the truth of revealed religion.

Convinced that the profanation of this blessed day is one of the great national sins on account of which God continues to visit us with judgment, and that its sanctification is essentially connected with our national prosperity, the advancement of the Divine glory, the salvation of the world, and the permanent revival of religion in the churches of Christ—we proceed to point out "SOME OF THE PREVALENT FORMS," or *modes*, in which the day is desecrated by those for whose present and everlasting benefit it was instituted.

I. *The Sabbath is desecrated, the efficacy of its ordinances is neutralised, and its benignant design is frustrated, when men are at no pains to prepare their hearts or to set their affairs in order for its due sanctification before it arrives.*—True religion is no enemy to industry. On the contrary, the Scriptures commend it as a virtue, while they denounce idleness as an odious vice. The fourth commandment, in particular, is not more explicit in enjoining that we rest on the seventh day, than that we "labour and do all our work" on the preceding six days. It is the Divine will that we so despatch and arrange our worldly and domestic affairs during the week, that they may stand still without detriment to them, or distraction to us, while we "wait only upon God," in His house, or in our closets, on His own day. The history of each well-instructed religious family and firm in the

land, proves that such a plan of preparation is both practicable and profitable.

"REMEMBER *the Sabbath-day to keep it holy*."—That is, look before you to the conclusion of the week; anticipate the Sabbath, and do not allow yourselves to be so immersed in worldly pursuits that it shall come upon you unawares. Have respect to it through the whole of your week-day duties; and give no pledge, neither enter into any engagement, which will entangle your consciences, or lay you under temptation to neglect its ordinances, or to secularise its hours. The ancient Jews so venerated this solemn injunction, that they devoted the day preceding their Sabbath to preparatory duties, and hence it was called, "The day of preparation."

Had those professing Christians who are *Shareholders* in Sabbath-breaking railways, or partners in other companies which desecrate this day, remembered this injunction, they would have demanded a legal pledge that no Sunday trading would be allowed, before they bought a share, subscribed a pound, or signed a document. But they forgot, if they did not utterly disregard, the word of the Lord; and many of them are now suffering the penalty of their unfaithfulness. Had some *professing Parents* remembered it before they apprenticed their children to Sabbath-breaking tradesmen, they would not now have had to deplore the irreligion and undutifulness of those who ought to have been the joy of their hearts, and the glory of their declining years. And had some commercial travellers so remembered it, as to have stipulated with their employers that they should neither transact business at home, nor travel abroad, on this holy day, they would not have been so lost to God and honour as they unhappily are.

Neither the Sabbath nor its ordinances operate as a charm on the soul of man. It is awfully possible for us to observe the day without securing its design; to be in the house of God without realising His presence; and to hear His Gospel without feeling its

power. These results are not only possible, but they will infallibly ensue unless we "set the Lord alway" before us, and so subordinate our worldly affairs to our spiritual interests, that instead of hindering they may contribute to our being "in the Spirit on the Lord's-day."

Considering how intimately the efficacy of ordinances, and the salvation of men, are linked with the observance of the Sabbath, and how necessary previous preparation is to its due sanctification—those *Masters* incur a fearful responsibility, who, by tasking their servants to perform an unreasonable amount of work, or who, by postponing the payment of their wages to a late hour on Saturday night, lay them under strong temptation, not only to neglect all preparation for the services of the day, but to desecrate the day itself. Those *Heads of Families* also are culpable, who not only permit, but encourage, their servants and children to leave certain departments of household service to be performed on the Lord's-day morning, which, with forethought, might have been done on the previous night; or who teach them to anticipate certain duties on the Sunday evening, which properly belong to the following morning.

The comparative inefficacy of Gospel ordinances in these lands, is a ground of grief and surprise to all godly persons and faithful ministers. With an unprecedented number of faithful men in the ministry, who generally preach the Gospel in a plain, powerful, and persuasive manner, and with the most unrestrained liberty to profess and practise true religion, a large proportion of those who attend our sanctuaries remain unsaved. Without denying the existence of auxiliary hindrances, it is our firm conviction that a chief cause of the inutility of Gospel ministrations with multitudes, both men and women, is the hurry and distraction of mind induced by the absorbing avidity and idolatrous devotedness with which they pursue the world, up to, and often beyond, the

sacred precincts of the Sabbath-day. If the ground be unprepared, it avails nothing though the seed be good and the sower diligent, for it will lie on the surface; and, in that case, it will either be devoured by the birds of the air, or scorched by the sun, or choked by the briers and weeds. If we grieve away the Holy Spirit during the six days, how can we hope He will come and comfort us on the seventh? If we do not supplicate His aid in private, and are unmindful of His monitions in our daily walk, how can we expect to be favoured with His celestial influences in public, when, with minds pre-occupied, we go with the multitude who keep holiday? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The Sabbath must be remembered *before* it comes, in order to be enjoyed *when* it comes. Sabbath ordinances must be approached in a Sabbath frame, otherwise they will harden rather than soften, and blind rather than enlighten; and, to secure this frame, we must not only lay the world aside with our hands in proper time, but eject it from our hearts; praying with all prayer, that the Lord of the Sabbath would possess them by His Spirit—"casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of himself."

II. *The Sabbath is desecrated when only a portion of its hours are devoted to sacred purposes, the remainder being spent in business or in pleasure.*—The spirit, as well as the letter, of the Sabbath-law requires, that we consecrate each seventh day to the worship of God. No one doubts whether the six days given for worldly business are to be taken entire; and were not the carnal mind enmity against God, and not subject to His law, the distinction of "*church hours*" would never have been heard of. This is one of the many ways in which the Church of Rome, and those who symbolise with her, make

void the law of God by their traditions; and the fact that some of our statutes, and many of our church-going population, still recognise "church hours" as possessing an exclusive sanctity, and a special obligation, which do not appertain to the other parts of the day, proves that the Reformation was incomplete, and that Protestants have yet much to learn in respect of duty, as well as of privilege.

This distinction has not even the shadow of scriptural authority; and, if admitted, it would utterly destroy the harmony which exists between the type and the antitype—the earthly and the heavenly rest. It is obviously based upon the assumption, that our obligations to keep the day *holy* are human and conventional; and it involves the double guilt of taking from, and of adding to, the things written in the Book of God. It implies that the duty we owe to God is altogether public and ceremonial; that family worship, the religious training of our children, and the cultivation of a devout spirit in the use of closet exercises, are matters of trivial importance, and may be neglected without loss, or guilt, or any great risk, provided we spend a given number of hours in the great congregation. Nay, more, it implies an insinuation that God has claimed an undue proportion of our time; that His Sabbath is a tax on our temporal interests, and a bar to our happiness; and that, consequently, we do well to alienate part of it to business or pleasure, as we may feel inclined. These are some of the guilty implications with which this irreligious mutilation of the Lord's-day is chargeable; and the bare mention of them is sufficient to draw forth the cordial condemnation of each lover of the Sabbath. Every sound argument which can be adduced to prove that a part of the Sabbath ought to be sanctified, carried to its legitimate issue, will prove that the entire day is *holy*, and ought to be employed in the public and private exercises of religion.

Let none, therefore, deceive themselves by imagining, that if they attend a place of worship once

or twice, they are at liberty to spend the remainder of the day in journeying, pleasure excursions, domestic amusements, or preparatory arrangements for the business of Monday. The *day*, the *whole day*, is the Lord's, and He commands us to "KEEP IT HOLY." He scorns a divided allegiance; and it is at our peril if we divide its hours between His worship and the service of Mammon. If we mar the type we dishonour its author, we destroy its efficacy, and we forfeit our interest in its heavenly antitype. To rob God of a part of His day in private, after we have been professing to worship Him in public, is rank hypocrisy; it is to enact the sin of those deceivers who called Jesus "Lord, Lord," but did not the things He commanded them; and if we become partners in their guilt, we shall assuredly be made sharers in their punishment. If we condemn the secularity of the Jews, who turned the temple into a house of merchandise; and abhor the impiety of Belshazzar, who, "with his princes, his wives, and his concubines," in their proud revelry, "drank out of the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem:" let us shrink from the no less palpable sacrilege of prostituting the evening hours of the Lord's-day to writing letters of business, taking stock, fagging at the ledger, or a survey of the farm. If we would escape the curse of him "that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully," there must be no mistake in this matter, no halting between two opinions—no trimming between God and Mammon. The "sign" (Ezek. xx. 12) will take effect, proving, either that we are *for* the Redeemer, or that we are *against* Him; that we are of those who *gather* with Him, or that our perilous employment is to *scatter* and destroy. The commandments of the Lord are not grievous; and He will not allow us, with impunity, to treat them as if they were so; or to asperse Him by word or deed, as if He were an austere master, "reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strawed."

"But wisdom is justified of her children;" and the people of God are forward to confess that His "service is perfect freedom;" and that in keeping His commandments "there is great reward." "This is the DAY which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in IT." "A DAY in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper" (or, as the margin reads, "I would choose rather to sit at the threshold") "of the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." This is the genuine language of all who love God, in all Churches and in all parts of the earth. To them the Sabbath-day is the best and brightest of the seven. They long for its dawn: they regret its decline; they rejoice to know that on it "God rested from *all* his work which he had made;" and that He "blessed it and sanctified it," from its commencement to its close. They exult in the fact that their Lord broke forth from the captivity of the grave, and entered into His *state* of meritorious REST, "*very early in the morning, when it was yet dark;*" and that He continued to commune, and to break bread with His disciples till it was "toward evening, and *the day far spent*." Whether they consider the example He has set them, the commandments He has given them, the claims of His love, the interests of His cause, the happiness of their fellow-men, the wants of their own souls, or the fatigues of their bodies, they dare not alienate any part of His day from its Divine and legitimate uses; and to all who tempt them to do so they say, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

III. *The Sabbath is desecrated when men enjoy its rest, and attend its ordinances merely out of deference to public opinion, or a regard to outward decency.*—The Sabbath is "THE HOLY OF THE LORD;" and it is never truly sanctified except when it is kept out of respect to His authority, and with a distinct reference to His glory. None but those who are influenced by a high and reverential regard for the vital interests

of spiritual religion, either enter into His lofty design, or yield a cheerful submission to its holy restrictions. Though it is characterised by supreme wisdom, enlightened benevolence, and tender humanity, and though it stands identified with the glory of God, the preservation of His truth, and the purity of His worship, it is slighted and profaned by all who take up religion as a mere system of forms and opinions. Multitudes in these kingdoms regard abstinence from labour on the Sabbath as a venerable custom; attendance on a place of worship as a respectable practice; buying and selling on that day as mean and vulgar; and journeying, or entertaining company, as habits dangerous to youth, and destructive of domestic order. If such persons carry on public works, these, as a matter of course, are stopped on the Lord's-day; their dwellings are as still and orderly as a minute attention to the duties of the toilet, and the preparation of a somewhat sumptuous dinner, will permit; family prayer, though it may have been neglected the whole week beside, is this day duly performed; religious books are brought out with much ostentation, and are to some extent read; and the family pew, whether in church or chapel, is both punctually frequented and well filled. And all this is done, their own conscience being witness, not out of reverence for the authority of God—not to advance the glory of God—not to promote spiritual religion in themselves or in others;—no! but to keep *caste* among their neighbours, to show their respect for the forms of religion, and thereby to patronise it in the eyes of the poor; or, it may be, to purchase the favour of God, and atone for the sins of the bygone week. This, alas! is but too faithful a picture of the Sabbath-keeping of thousands; and we venture to pronounce it not only deficient, but sinful, in the motives from which it springs, in the spirit by which it is characterised, and in the end to which it is directed.

The Scriptures abound with allusions to the

motives from which human actions spring; and they contain numerous examples of God's displeasure against those who, through presumption, pride, or carelessness, violated the instituted order of His worship, and perverted His service to selfish or secular designs. When Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered strange fire, the Lord slew them and said, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh to me; and before all the people will I be glorified." The breach which was made upon Israel by the death of Uzzah, when the ark was brought up from the house of Aminadab in Gibeah, was occasioned by a disregard of the Divine command respecting the *mode* in which that sacred vessel was to be carried.—(Numb. iv. 15, compared with 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13.) When the Jews ceased to respect the authority of God, and failed to make His glory their ultimate end in His worship, "he that killed an ox, was as if he slew a man; he that sacrificed a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offered an oblation, as if he offered swine's flesh; and he that burned incense, as if he blessed an idol." And if we, on the Sabbath, abstain from labour, and attend ordinances, merely to refresh the body, to escape the charge of irreligion, or out of deference to human legislation and custom, or because we delight in pulpit oratory, in music, or in dress, he will scorn our worship, and punish us with those who sacrifice to their own net, and who burn incense to their own drag. For though a good motive cannot sanctify a bad action, a corrupt motive does vitiate a service which is outwardly correct.

The Pharisees gave alms, but it was that they might have honour of men; they made long prayers, but it was for a pretence; they fasted, but they disfigured their faces, that they might appear unto men to fast; and, therefore, they had their reward—that is, they gained the praise of men, and incurred the curse of God. The service of God is "a reasonable service;" and, to be "acceptable," it must be

performed from pure motives, in the spirit of faith and love, and in harmony with the written word. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." In his worship the posture of the body is important only so far as it expresses or promotes the lowliness and fervour of the mind; the language of the lips is valuable only as a vehicle for declaring the desires, and as an index to the dispositions of the inner man; and unless our cessation from secular toil on the Sabbath be associated with a distinct recognition of the authority of God, a grateful recollection of His creative goodness and redeeming love, faith in the mediation of the Lord Jesus, and an unreserved surrender of ourselves to His service, our worship will be rejected as bodily exercise, and as mere lip-service.

The Lord of the Sabbath trieth the hearts and reins of His worshippers. He knoweth what is in man; and no language, however scriptural or eloquent—no offerings, however costly—can procure acceptance in His sight, if inward submission, and a single intention to please Him be wanting. Independently of profit or loss, praise or blame, popular custom or human caprice, we must KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY. Yes! As we deprecate the curse, and as we desire the blessing of the Lawgiver of heaven and earth, we must *keep it* HOLY. We must keep it HOLY because it is HIS, set apart for His worship, claimed by His commandment, sanctified by His example, and associated with His honour and our salvation. Instead of resting in the *form*, we must subordinate that to the *spirit* of the ordinance, and maintain a heavenly harmony between the motives of our minds, the language of our lips, and the whole of our outward deportment. In the closet, in the sanctuary, and in the domestic circle—morning, noon, and night—we must honour Him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words. And if we, and our respective households, thus delight ourselves in the Lord, and

in His holy day, He "will cause us to ride upon the high places of the earth, and will feed us with the heritage of Jacob; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—(Isa. lviii. 13, 14.)

IV. *The Sabbath is desecrated when it is devoted to secular purposes and servile labour.*—"In it thou shalt not do any work."—(Exod. xx. 10.) The nature of the case, as well as other texts of Scripture, requires that this prohibition be interpreted so as to except *works of necessity and mercy*. Our Lord taught, that it was lawful on the Sabbath-day to heal diseases; to flee from danger; to do good; to satisfy hunger; to save life; to pull an ox or an ass out of a pit; and to loose and lead cattle away to watering. These exceptions are obviously specimens, rather than a perfect catalogue, of permitted works. No one can doubt that it is lawful to quench fire; to defend ourselves and our families from aggression, whether of war or of robbers; to guide the helm and shift the sails at sea; to visit the sick; and to prepare necessary food for our households; to make collections for the poor and the cause of God; to teach the children of the destitute and the profligate to read the Word of God; and, when it cannot be delayed without danger, to bury the dead. But while we glorify God, and exemplify the benignant character of Christianity, by engaging in exercises which are clearly "works of necessity and mercy," we need to guard lest sloth or self-interest plead necessity where none exists.

Medical men, we fear, often impose on themselves in this way. Except in seasons of epidemic disease, and on some other extraordinary occasions, they might generally, by diligence and foresight, secure time for attending public worship. The scepticism which too much prevails in the medical profession, is no doubt nursed, if it be not occasioned, by habitual absence from the means of grace; and young practitioners, who yet believe there is a God, that man has an immortal soul, and that Christianity is

Divine, will do well to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," lest they also be given up to "strong delusions." Many *ship-owners* err in this matter. Under pretence that Sunday is a "lucky day," that the tide serves, or that the wind is fair, they contrive to make it a common day for leaving harbour; as if chance, and not Providence, ruled the winds of heaven, the tides of the ocean, and the affairs of men; or as if God could be propitiated by a practice implying a direct breach of His law, or could permit those to be ultimate losers who prefer the interests of eternity to those of time, and the glory of His name to the favour of men and the figments of superstition. No class of men can be trained to habits of religion and morality without Sabbath worship; and the proverbial irreligion of those sailors who are debarred from it, constitutes an argument in favour of the sanctification of the day, which, we trust, will ere long lead to the discontinuance of the practice we condemn; and which religious captains and seamen feel to be a great hardship.

The *owners of factories*, and other public works, greatly err if they think they are justified in repairing their machinery on the Sabbath, under pretence that they thereby prevent their work-people from losing a day's wages. No! Such employers seek their own interest, not that of the poor; and while the harsh clanking of the Sunday hammer publishes their profanity in the ears of men, the pretence on which it is wielded proclaims their hypocrisy in the ears of God. But supposing their motive were benevolent, the practice is unjustifiable; for we may not "do evil, that good may come." Neither can those *shopkeepers* be exculpated who trade on the Sabbath, on the plea that they deal in "perishable articles." In most instances the supply of such articles can be regulated according to the demand; and, admitting that, occasionally, some loss be sustained by preserving a good conscience, it is our duty to keep the law of God at all hazards, and despite of all sacrifices. We

have known tradesmen and shopkeepers, who were poor, embarrassed, and neglected while they traded on the Sabbath; but who, from the time they sacrificed their ungodly gains, prospered, and grew in favour both with God and man; and we could specify some powerful firms that have been ruined, and rich families which have been impoverished, whose contempt of the Sabbath was notorious. In those factories in which the practice of repairing machinery on Sunday is kept up, repairs are continually required; which may be accounted for on the ground that fractures are aggravated by postponement, that repairs made on Sunday are often necessarily superficial, and that they are effected by men destitute of religious principle. Those workmen who labour on the Sabbath in constructing railways (melancholy instances of which have occurred all over the country), generally spend more than their extra wages in purchasing strong drink, to supply stimulus to their exhausted powers; and we have been assured, by an extensive and conscientious contractor, that the work which they execute in *seven days* is generally less in amount, and worse in point of execution, than that which is done by sober, orderly men in *six*.

It may be affirmed of all who buy, or sell, or labour on this holy day, that they neither fear God nor regard man; for they violate the laws and invade the rights of both. They manifest an atheistical distrust in Providence; they pour contempt upon one of the most merciful institutions to which the God of mercy has given existence; they betray an utter indifference about the enjoyment of God's favour, and a total disregard of his threatened vengeance.

It strikes us as a remarkable and melancholy fact, that while common trading and ordinary shopkeeping are generally regarded as flagrant and disreputable breaches of Sabbath law, the sale of intoxicating liquors is scarcely regarded as a sin. In London, porter and beer are unblushingly hawked about the

streets; and those families are thought excessively precise who refuse to take it in on the Lord's-day. In town and country those public-house keepers who will not entertain company, nor sell spirits on this day, are spoken of as paragons of goodness. How comes this about? How is this lenity to this most demoralising practice to be accounted for? In our estimation, those who retail intoxicating drinks on this day, and who afford harbour to the sons and daughters of dissipation, are pre-eminently guilty. They not only neglect the means of grace themselves, but they furnish that which unfits and indisposes thousands for worshipping God either in public or in private. Though it might be an equal sin in the sight of God, it would be far less injurious to society were the mason to take his plummet, his trowel, and his other implements, and proceed with the building he had been erecting the preceding week. There is a woe recorded against the man who giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth his bottle to him, that maketh him drunken; but a tenfold woe shall be the portion of those who make a trade of this practice on the holy Sabbath.

"The closing of public-houses on the Sabbath-day is a measure which ought to receive the unanimous concurrence and support of all moralists, philanthropists, and true patriots. The statistics of criminal business for the borough of Liverpool show a regular increase in the committals to the borough gaol, commensurate with the increase of the population. In the year 1841-2, the prisoners in the borough gaol were 16,657; but in the next year, when the public-houses were partially closed on the Sabbath-day, the number sensibly diminished, instead of increasing with the increasing population; and even after two or three years they fell short of the above number; thus showing the beneficial effect of this merely partial restriction of the public-houses and beer-shops. The following shows the number of prisoners in the borough gaol for four years :—

1841-2. Total number of prisoners . . .	16,657
1842-3. When the public-houses were partially closed on Sunday	15,512
1843-4.	15,790
1845-6.	16,214

These data are as convincing as figures can be. The decrease in the committals appears as the necessary and natural consequence of the reduced temptations held out to the lower classes by the venders of beer and spirituous liquors. All we now require is to go one step further—close the public-houses altogether on that day of public rest. Let not the publican enjoy advantages of trading which no other class enjoys. It is an urgent matter, if morality and good conduct are essential to a nation's well-being. A strong public demonstration ought to be instantly made in favour of the measure. The clergy should lead the van, and pioneer the way for so great and desirable an improvement. All lovers of sobriety, and virtue, and good order, would zealously support them; and one general well-directed and mighty effort would soon destroy a system as repulsive to common sense and justice as it is injurious to morals, and destructive of the sobriety and well-being of the lower classes."—(*Liverpool Courier*, Aug. 11, 1847.)

The persons immediately addressed in the fourth commandment are parents, masters, and magistrates; and, under and through them, all others whatsoever are enjoined to abstain from servile employ on the Sabbath-day; hence the following injunctions:—

1. "*Nor thy son nor thy daughter.*"—Though it is possible that our children might work by way of amusement, and without being observed by neighbours, or censured by ministers; and though their own depraved hearts might incline them to desecrate rather than to sanctify the Lord's-day, yet He who made them, and who is entitled to their worshipful subjection, demands their obedience, and holds us responsible for their compliance. Therefore, as we love them, and value His favour, we must neither

seduce them by our example, nor coerce them by our authority, nor permit them, through mistaken fondness, to profane this holy day. On the contrary, we ought, by precept and example; by the exercise of our authority; by the lure of our love; by the dread of our displeasure; and by a frequent and faithful exposition of the law, the promises, and the threatenings of God—to encourage, persuade, and constrain them to spend it in public worship, private prayer, religious reading, and godly discourse. Our own peace and our children's salvation are intimately involved in this matter. Juvenile delinquency generally commences in some form of Sabbath profanation; whereas early piety is uniformly fostered and confirmed by conscientious Sabbath keeping.

2. "*Nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant.*"—In a community like that of the Israelites, among whom a limited bondage was tolerated, masters might have surmised that, though both they and their children were forbidden to labour on the Sabbath, their domestics, whom they had bought with their money or taken in war—who were bound to serve for a term of years, and who would probably rather work than worship—might dispense with the obligation of the law, and prosecute at least in-door employments. But no such licence was allowed. "The Sabbath was made for man"—in all his various tribes, in all the diversity of his external circumstances, and in all the ages of his existence; it was made for the Gentile as well as the Jew; for the servant as well as the master; for the maid as well as her mistress. The conventional engagements into which we enter with one another cannot disannul the primary relations we sustain to God, nor free us from the obligation which these relations involve. Household servants ought therefore not only to stipulate for a certain rate of wages, but for liberty to worship God on His own day. The Sabbath is theirs for *rest* and for *worship;* not theirs to be let out for *hire*, or to be spent in *pastime*. The practice of allowing servants to spend

the Sabbath out of their master's house is fraught with evil; and ought never to be permitted except on special occasions, and when implicit confidence can be placed in the principles and piety of the individual so indulged. To prevent gossip and Sunday gadding, as well as to encourage punctual attendance and devotional habits, masters would do well to provide accommodation for their domestics, not only in their own place of worship, but in their own family pew.

Though the above injunction refers especially to domestic servants, and such as work on their masters' premises, or with their masters' tools and cattle, it obviously inculcates that we ought not to employ any who perversely violate the Sabbath, though they may work in their own houses and on their own account. The King of Israel said, "I will not know" or approve of "a wicked person. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. He that walketh in a perfect way shall serve me." Were Christians, generally, to imitate David in this godly reserve; were they invariably to prefer and encourage sober, conscientious, and Sabbath-keeping mechanics, carriers, and tradesmen; and were they to discard and discountenance drunkards, socialists, and Sabbath-breakers, the benefit to the Church and the world would be great and lasting By acting thus, we may expect to be stigmatised as persecutors and narrow-minded bigots by all who worship an infidel liberalism; but if we fail to act thus, how can we acquit ourselves of the heavier charge of being "partakers of other men's sins?" Most assuredly, if we love God more than ourselves; if His glory be dearer to us than our money; and if we are as impatient of the dishonour which sin casts on His name, as we are at the losses to which fraud and violence subject us, we shall act thus. But, alas! many masters care not how God's work is neglected, provided their own be duly performed. Nay, some of them, to the scandal of the Christian name, refuse to

take men into their employ, or to encourage them in trade, unless they formally stipulate to secularise the Sabbath as they may direct, and as circumstances may require. Need we wonder if the servants of such masters prove unfaithful; if, when they look for much for labour so obtained, lo! it comes to little; and if, when they bring it home, the Lord blows upon it?

3. "*Nor thy cattle.*"—Beasts of burden are no more capable of sustaining incessant labour than man. Coach proprietors, and others who let horses out on hire, know, that without a weekly rest their energies are speedily wasted, and their lives are materially shortened. In this way God avenges the wrongs of these generous animals on such of their owners as abuse them. Previously to the introduction of steam conveyances into this country, horses were made extensively subservient to Sabbath profanation; pleasure excursions and business journeys having been effected chiefly by their means. So far as ill health, distance, or the inclemency of the weather, may render their services necessary to carry us to the house of God, or to the beds of the dying, we may innocently use them, but no further. To hire them, or to let them out for hire, for the purposes of trade, for the gratifying of pride, or the securing of pleasure on the Sabbath, are clearly violations of the law of God.

It is a melancholy consideration, that in this Christian country, abounding with the means of grace, many thousands of coachmen, omnibus and cab drivers, are as effectually debarred from the house of God as though there were no Sabbath kept, no Gospel preached, and no worship performed in the land. We loudly complain of the impositions and flagrant wickedness of some of these men, without considering that we are accessories to their evil deeds, as far as we contribute to shut them out from the means of salvation by employing them on the Lord's-day. Some of them are alive to their danger,

and lament the necessity they are under of ruining their souls, or of leaving their families to starve. Others are as ignorant, and almost as insensible to moral propriety, as the beasts they drive; and, consequently, have no desire to mingle with our worshipping assemblies; while many strengthen themselves in wickedness by arguments drawn from the inconsistency of those who, though they profess to reverence the Sabbath, and to delight in the worship of God, pay them for breaking the former and for slighting the latter. Many of the cab and omnibus owners in London are said to be Jews; and it is an appalling consideration, that professing Christians should, by hiring their vehicles on the Lord's-day, teach—yea! bribe—them to treat Christianity as an uninfluential fable. Should one of their drivers at any time be seized with compunction, and express a wish to attend a place of worship, it may be imagined with what unmeasured scorn the request would be rejected. How can we profess to love God and our neighbour?—how can we stand clear of the blood of these men's souls, whether Jews or Gentiles, unless we determine that, as far as we are concerned, their Sunday driving shall cease; and that we will no more cast a stumbling-block in their way, nor contribute to rob them of those opportunities of grace, on the right use of which their salvation is suspended?

The practice of holding cattle-markets or fairs on Mondays is fraught with evil. It not only affords the irreligious a pretext for spending the Sabbath hours in travel, and railway directors a plea for running their Sunday trains, but it involves an extensive system of preliminary Sunday bargaining. It lays conscientious men under a necessity of being from home on the Lord's-day, and thus subjects them to great temptation, and to much additional expense. It draws crowds of thoughtless youths away from their homes and Sunday-schools, and familiarises them with scenes of cruelty and with the vilest

language; and it greatly annoys and distracts the religious part of the community in their going *to* and returning *from* their places of worship. That the inhabitants of London, and other towns in the United Kingdom, should have tolerated the Smithfield and similar nuisances, can only be accounted for on the ground that the things of the world, even in their meanest and least inviting forms, are preferred by the majority to the glory of God and the interests of true religion. We are aware that these markets are established by law, and cannot be discontinued without magisterial, and perhaps Parliamentary, interference; but we feel assured that were the Christian people in the towns and villages which are subjected to their demoralising influences, only to do their duty in enlightening the public mind, and in memorialising the proper authorities, a speedy change would be effected, and that without damage to the legitimate interest of any party. To honourable and conscientious dealers the change would be a real boon; and as to others, the notoriety they have earned for fraud, falsehood, and kindred vices, furnishes another convincing evidence, not only that an alteration is necessary on their account, but that Sabbath worship is essential to the very existence of truth and righteousness among men.

V. *The Sabbath is desecrated when it is spent in convivial feasting, in worldly discourse, in visiting places of amusement, in light and unspiritual reading, or in walks and excursions of mere pleasure.*—Sunday ought to be a privileged day in food, in clothes, and in family fellowship, as far as its sanctity and the discharge of its appropriate duties will permit. All Christians ought to salute its dawn with songs, and Christian parents should endeavour to make their households happy when they meet at the family board. The trials and crosses of the past week should, as far as possible, be forgotten and banished. The grace of redemption, the care and kind interpositions of Providence, the progress of the work of

God, the virtues and self-denying labours of the Lord's people, the wonders of creation, and felicities of the heavenly rest, should be the themes of our Sabbath-day discourse. Shy distrust and lofty reserve ought to be banished from the family circle on this day especially; and all should be encouraged to join in spiritual conversation, in singing psalms and hymns, and in offering up prayer. At such a time, and in such circumstances, the parent and master, who is himself in the Spirit of the Lord's-day, will feel his heart warmed and enlarged; and, anxious to diffuse the peace and joy which animate his own bosom, he will delight to bless his household, saying, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

This would be to call the Sabbath "a delight." But we regret to say that in many families in which God is not wholly forgotten, the evening of the day is spent in a very different manner. Relatives and near neighbours regularly congregate: and after a few pious preliminary topics have been touched, they slide by degrees into a free conversation about politics, prices of grain, growing crops, and passing events; and ere they break up they fix the times of projected journeys, repeat the scandal of the week, and discuss the characters of magistrates and ministers, to the infinite damage of the religious interests of their children and servants. This is a soul-destroying and a God-dishonouring custom. It has indeed an air of friendship to man, but it betokens enmity to God. If any of our readers have opened their houses for such gatherings, or have mingled in them, we entreat them, as they regard the favour of God, the credit of religion, and the salvation of their families, to give them up at once, and for ever. It matters not whom you offend, or what reproach you incur; the practice must be renounced, or the curse of God will rest on your souls, and abide in your houses.

Religion enjoins hospitality, and it fosters friendship; but it requires that our friendships be religious, and that our hospitality be administered in harmony with the law of God, and with the honour of His house. It is God who sets the solitary in families as a flock. He is the God of the families of the whole earth; and as their God, he holds their heads responsible for the moral conduct of all under their roof, and He will require it at their hand if they permit even *visitors* to profane His holy day. "*Nor the stranger within thy gates.*" Some of these may plead that it is not their custom to keep the Sabbath so strictly as we do, and they may think us rude unless we relax our Sunday discipline to gratify their gaiety. But the law is the Lord's; our own obligations to obey are imperative; and we possess no power to absolve others from bonds equally binding. Whilst, therefore, we exercise all the warm-hearted amenities of Christian friendship, we must neither, through fear or favour, neglect the family altar and the great congregation, nor permit the intervals of public worship to be filled up with amusements or frivolous discourse. Parents cannot be too particular in this matter. The backsliding of many young disciples may be traced to intercourse with genteel Sabbath-breakers, whom they first met in their father's house; and the conversion of others has been the result of a friendly visit to a faithful, Sabbath-keeping family. See, then, that you resolutely maintain the sanctity of the Lord's-day; and if reflections be at any time cast upon you for your fidelity, reply, in the language of the apostle, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. But we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

The practice of walking out into the country on the Lord's-day is, to say the least, highly inexpedient on the part of those who fear God. We admit that a survey of the works of God may assist us in forming lofty conceptions of His perfections, and in approach-

ing his throne of grace with augmented confidence; but, as we are surrounded with Sabbath-breakers, to whom we cannot explain our motives, nor tell the secrets of our hearts, and who are sure to justify their sinful excursions by an appeal to our brief meditative walks; we are bound, alike by a regard for the glory of God and love to the souls of men, to abstain from that which might, under other circumstances, have been done without condemnation. "Let no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way;" "Let not then your good be evil spoken of," are apostolic precepts, which have a distinct bearing on the case in hand. To walk or ride out on the Sabbath, on pretence that health cannot otherwise be preserved, implies a reflection both on the wisdom and goodness of God, as if obedience to His law were necessarily incompatible with the enjoyment of His providential blessings. Thousands have ascribed their religious declension, and subsequent ruin, to the practice of Sunday walking. Those who plead for it, who extol the beauties of nature, and magnify the advantages to be derived from studying her lessons as portrayed in the "cloud-capped mountain," the verdant valley, the winding stream, and the forest's foliage, generally despise the beauties of Christian holiness, and scoff at the doctrines of revealed religion. As is their zeal for liberalising the Sabbath-law, such is their laxity in practising the Christian virtues. With them the principles of morality are conventional; Christian experience is enthusiasm; the preaching of the Gospel is an expensive expedient, which might be advantageously merged in a general and enlightened system of education; and the God of grace is supplanted in their creed and conversation by the God of nature.

The limits of this essay forbid more than a passing censure on certain other refined, but bold and seductive expedients, which have been recently invented to draw men into the habitual desecration of this holy day. Numerous lyceums and other reading-

rooms have been opened in our large towns on the Sabbath, for newspaper reading and political discussion; than which we know of no practices, short of absolute profanity, that have a more direct tendency to secularise the mind, obliterate serious impressions, foster scepticism, and beget a contempt for the Word and ordinances of God. That the infidel and profligate who professedly trample truth under foot, and have laid the reins on the neck of their lusts, should frequent the news-room on the Lord's-day, is no matter of surprise; but that professing Christians, heads of respectable families, and gentlemen who are advocates of social order, should do so, is ground of astonishment. What! have they no sense of shame? no consciousness of responsibility? no trust in Providence? Is there no fear of God before their eyes? no gratitude in their souls for the distinguishing favours with which He has crowned them? Or do they think their pillared porticoes, their splendid halls, their commercial confederations, and their princely subscriptions, will purchase impunity from Divine rebuke, though they thus openly pour contempt on that law which God spake with His own lips, wrote with His own finger in tables of stone, and enshrined with His own glory? Vain men! Let the wrecked fortunes and blighted characters of their predecessors in Sabbath profanation—let the failure of their recent speculations, and the wide-spread embarrassment of their railway schemes and manufacturing interests, admonish them of the certain and complicated ruin which must come upon all "who take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Tea-gardens have of late been multiplied; and in their season they exhibit on the Sabbath scenes of riot not to be described. Zoological and botanical gardens, also, draw multitudes away from their families, and from the house of God; and by dissipating

the mind, and by leading to unholy associations, they prepare for grosser scenes in places of less reputable resort. Musical concerts are held on Sunday evenings in public-houses of the very worst description, at which tea, coffee, and spirituous liquors are sold, sacred and profane music are impiously blended, and the praises of God and of His redeeming love are chanted to the sound of the viol and the organ, in connexion with the foul orgies of Bacchus and Venus. On the plea of charity and economy, subscriptions to sick clubs and political societies are extensively collected on Sunday mornings. Business letters are written, stock-in-trade is taken, and shop-goods are arranged for Monday's sale; all to save time, and supersede the necessity of employing an additional assistant. Many commercial travellers so contrive their journeys, that three-fourths of their Sundays are spent at sea in ships, or in railway-carriages on land: all to "cut up" a rival, and do "a capital stroke of business." Upwards of fifteen thousand persons, it is computed, are employed in Great Britain on the Sabbath in post-office service. The author of "Mammon" estimates the neglecters of public worship, in London alone, at six hundred and fifty thousand; all of whom may be set down as systematic Sabbath-breakers. Four-fifths of these are probably volunteers in transgression; while the remaining portion is composed of the poor enslaved men and their families, who, in one capacity or another, are made to minister to the sinful gratification of the heedless but hard-hearted majority. The Paddington end of Marylebone parish has long been noted for the darkness and spiritual destitution of its inhabitants; and the fact is fully accounted for on the ground, that that neighbourhood, above most others, abounds with cab and omnibus drivers, and the families of men connected with the endless diversified forms of railway Sunday desecration. What a fearful account will the task-masters and tempters of these men have to give in "that day!"

"In 1843 (the last year in which official stamp returns were issued), three (London) Sabbath papers consumed 5,369,000 stamps—being nearly 2,000 more than were consumed by the 77 papers published in Scotland and Wales during the same period, and upwards of 1,600,000 more issues than of Bibles, Testaments, portions of the Scripture, and religious books issued last year (1846), by the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Trinitarian Bible Society, the Free Press Bible Company of Scotland, and the grants of the Religious Tract Society. Besides the three papers above named, there are three others of a similar character, but much smaller in circulation, whose united issues make a total of 613,000. Thus the issues of these six stamped (Sunday) papers, which may be fairly characterised as exceedingly pernicious, amounted in 1845 to 5,982,000. . . . Since 1843 four weekly papers have arisen, and attained an equally extended circulation with the three notorious papers previously named; while these last have increased rather than diminished their issues. The four new papers just alluded to circulate a total of about 110,000 per week, or 5,720,000 per year. Let this be added to the year's circulation of the six previously mentioned—namely, 5,982,000, and we have a total circulation of Sabbath-breaking stamped literature amounting to 11,702,000. . . . Or we may view this subject in another way, and say, that as almost all the twenty-eight millions of pernicious literature issuing from London in one year is published *on* or *for* the Sabbath, it may be safely affirmed that there are 500,000 Lord's-day issues against 63,000 for any one day's issue of the entire daily press; or 500,000 Lord's-day issues against the whole week's issue to the daily press of 378,000." These startling statements are taken from an extraordinary pamphlet, published by Partridge and Oakey, London, entitled, "The Power of the Press: is it rightly Employed?" And the writer having given them, asks, "Who can contemplate this fact un-

moved?" Who, indeed? We confess we are more than moved: we are astounded, and almost overwhelmed! The same writer assigns data for believing, that besides the 500,000 stamped papers which are published weekly by the London press, either "*on* or *for* the Sabbath," there are about 200,000 unstamped publications of an infidel and corrupting character, which issue from the same source during the same period. Thus (without mentioning works which are so bad that, though published by thousands, they have to be circulated by stealth) we have an aggregate of 700,000 licentious, seditious, and Sabbath-breaking publications circulating weekly through the families of the United Kingdom, and read with avidity by those who sit in the parlour and who work in the kitchen, who lounge in the saloon and who brutalise themselves in the alehouse. Who can wonder that crime abounds, or that the judgments of God afflict the land!

Let all who fear God, who dread His wrath, who love their country, and who desire to see religion revived, and social order promoted, determine, "As for me and my house," we will "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." Let the Sunday newspaper be banished from the house; let the Sabbath evening gatherings be discontinued; let Sunday walking, and working, and riding, and letter-writing, and stock-taking, and book-keeping, all cease at once; and, in the strength of God, determine, that wherein you have done evil, you will do so no more. Delays are dangerous; especially when interest, and pleasure, and popularity plead against conscience, the rights of the poor, and the claims of an unseen Saviour. Your own eternal destiny, the destiny of your children, dependents, and acquaintances, tremble in the balances while you hesitate; and your decision will probably turn the scale for bliss or woe. Not only *rest* on the Sabbath, but keep it as a *holy rest*. Be "in the Spirit;" esteem it as the "holy of the Lord and honourable;" revere the sovereign authority by which

it was instituted, meditate on the glorious events it commemorates, endeavour to realise its merciful design, and through faith in Him whose name it bears, aspire after the rest which remains for the people of God.

Having got our hearts right with God in this great matter, let us labour to convince all with whom we have any influence, that the law of the Sabbath, like the other precepts in the Decalogue, stands uncancelled; that its proper business is the public and private worship of God; and that its great and beneficent design embraces the protection of the poor, the diffusion of truth, the salvation of man, and the glory of God. Whatever labours or recreations are inconsistent with this design, and tend to indispose us for this worship, are clearly sinful, though in themselves, and when practised on other days, they may be innocent. Let us testify to old and young, rich and poor, that if the threatenings of Almighty God are to be believed, if His providential judgments have a voice; if all history be not a lie; if it be notorious that those who desecrate this day are devoid of Christian experience; and if the recorded confessions which the profligate have made in our gaols and on our gibbets are not sheer fabrications, then the face of the Lord is set against them that devote the Sabbath to pastime or to unnecessary servile toil. And further, let us publish, that the promises of God are true, if the concurrent voice of sacred and profane history is to be believed, if the testimony of the holiest men in all lands and in all ages is entitled to credit; and if the joyous experience, the domestic happiness, the sanctified prosperity, and the peaceful and triumphant deaths of God's people are to be regarded as evidences of His favour, then it is demonstrated that God loves and honours all those who "*Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.*"

VII.

THE SABBATH A HAPPY DAY, VIEWED ESPECIALLY IN ITS INFLUENCE, WHEN RIGHTLY OBSERVED, ON THE RELIGION OF INDIVIDUALS.

BY THE REV. JOHN HANNAH, D.D.,
WESLEYAN COLLEGE, DIDSBURY.

"God *blessed* the seventh day."—(Gen. ii. 3.) He did so when He sanctified it, or set it apart as a day of holy rest. The seventh day, then, or the Sabbath, was designed in its original institution to be a *blessed* day, and a day of *blessing* to all who should duly observe it. So it was regarded under former dispensations—not as a day of painful restraint, but as a day of peace and good. "*Blessed* is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it."—(Isa. lvi. 2.) The Sabbath was to be called "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable;" and to every one who should honour Him, in the faithful maintenance of its offices and claims, was the promise made, with singular and impressive emphasis, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—(Isa. lviii. 13, 14.) When the Lord "caused" the children of Israel "to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness," He "gave" them His "Sabbaths" as an invaluable privilege, which they were taught by new instructions and precepts to remember and apply to their proper purpose; "to be a sign," it is added, "between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."—(Ezek. xx. 10-12.) Did not our Saviour also supply a similar

representation of the Sabbath, and confirm these testimonies by His own authority, when He said, "The Sabbath was made *for man?*"—(Mark ii. 27.) It was made for man's religious use, improvement, and advantage—as a day of rest, of sanctity, and of blessing. Such was its character at the beginning; and such also was its character in the successive ages of the Mosaic economy. It was a *happy* day.

When the observance of the Sabbath was transferred, under the guidance of Him who is "Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 28), from the seventh day of the week to the first, its *happy* character, or its character of *blessing*, still remained; but it remained with a multiplication and increase of such benefits as our better dispensation brings. Everything connected with the institution of the *Christian* Sabbath, which is celebrated on the first day of the week, marks it as a season of joy. Was it not on that day that Jesus our Lord, when He had "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. iii. 18), rose from the dead in our nature and name, and thus sealed the blessing of life and immortality to man?—(See and compare Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1, 2; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1, 19.) Was it not on that day that He appeared to His assembled disciples in regular and repeated visitations, each one distinguished by the bestowment of extraordinary blessing?—(Luke xxiv. 36; John xx, 19-23, 26-29.) Was it not on that day, "when the day," indeed, "of Pentecost was fully come," and the disciples, accustomed now to meet in their more solemn assemblies on the first day of the week, "were all with one accord in one place," that the Holy Spirit descended in the plentiful effusions of his grace, and opened the promised kingdom of heaven among men?—(Acts ii. 1-4.) Was it not on that day that Christians of the apostolical age met together, from the time of our Lord's resurrection, to unite in peaceful worship, to hear the Word of God, to partake of the Lord's Supper, and to lay

up in store for the assistance of others?—(Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) Was it not on that day, significantly denominated "the Lord's-day,"* that St. John, being "in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," "was in the Spirit," and was favoured with a glorious manifestation of his Lord's presence—another appearance of Jesus on the first day of the week—immediately followed by the most sublime discoveries of things in heaven and earth, and a prediction of events which were to take place in the several ages of the Church to the end of time?—(Rev. i. 9, 10.) It is this day of which grateful mention is made in the epistle ascribed to Barnabas (cap. xv.): "We celebrate the eighth day with joy, in which Jesus rose also from the dead, and having appeared" to His disciples "ascended to heaven." And it is this day of which Ignatius, in his Epistles to the Magnesians (sect. ix), says, "They who were conversant in ancient things," or who lived under the old dispensation, "have come to a newness of hope, no longer observing Sabbaths"—that is, Jewish Sabbaths in the Jewish way—literally, "no longer sabbatising"—but living according to the Lord's life," or, rather, "the Lord's-day," according to its rule and privileges; in which our life also has risen up through Him and His death." These particulars are enumerated here, not to prove that, under the Christian dispensation, the observance of the Sabbath really is transferred from the seventh day of the week to the first. Undoubtedly they do prove that point as is ably evinced elsewhere. But they are now alleged to show that all things relating

* The first day of the week appears to have been denominated *the Lord's-day*, because it was the day on which the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, and because byrising from the dead on that day, *He instituted it as a day of Christian rest and appropriated it to himself as His own peculiar day.* "It is called 'the Lord's-day' for the same reason that the holy supper of the Eucharist is called the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 20); that is, because it was both instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, and ought, in its end and use, to be referred also to the same Lord. That the last day of the week is now changed into the first day, was done, not by human, but by Divine authority. For He only could change the day of the Sabbath who is Lord of the Sabbath, Christ.—(Mark ii. 28.)"—(Hornbeck, "Ins. Theol." cap. xiii. sect. 25.)

to the appointment and celebration of the Christian Sabbath present it to us as a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*. The ancient Sabbath, the Sabbath of the patriarchs and the Sabbath of Israel, was blessed; and blessed likewise, but in a yet higher degree, is the Sabbath which we are now taught to observe—the Sabbath of Christians.

The argument which we wish to pursue at present is grounded on this fact, or is drawn from this particular character of the Sabbath. It is a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*, more especially as it is a chosen means of promoting the religion of individuals, and of thus assisting them in their preparation for man's true and permanent happiness in the world to come. Review the history of the Christian Church, and, in that history, examine the course of the most circumspect and consistent Christians. Do you not see how the devout observance of the Christian Sabbath contributed, by the grace of God, to their spiritual advancement and prosperity? Have not the most exemplary Christians, in different ages, and of different communities, been most regardful of that day? Could you easily find patterns of eminent Christianity in any who were negligent of it, or careless of its peculiar obligations? To record biographical instances in evidence and support of this truth, where instances abound in such numbers, is too copious a plan for a single treatise. But to furnish a brief description of the happiness which springs from God's blessing on the observance of the Sabbath, and which the best biographical notices of Christians would illustrate and confirm, may be attempted. This will prepare the way for an earnest recommendation of the Sabbath as a day of inestimable good, and for an affectionate expostulation with those who oppose or neglect its proper requirements.

I. The Sabbath is a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*, to the Christian man, because it is a day on which HE HAS A PEACEFUL RESPITE FROM ALL THAT FATIGUES, MOLESTS, AND DISTRESSES HIM, IN THE ORDINARY PRO-

SECUTION OF HIS WORLDLY CONCERNS. A true Christian will indeed strive to consecrate every day to God, and to intermingle the duties and exercises of devotion with its several engagements; but he feels it to be a great and unspeakable prerogative that he has one day granted to him in seven—a day returning at intervals regularly appointed, and occupying its due place in the system of life, on which he may withdraw himself from everything secular, and "may attend upon the Lord without distraction."—(1 Cor. vii. 35.) Secular affairs must of necessity, and in harmony with the arrangements of Divine Providence, engage his attention at other times. But how grateful and seasonable a relief it is, when, on the Lord's-day, he can say to them all, "Abide ye here, and I will go yonder and worship!"—(Gen. xxii. 5.)

Is it not a relief to many Christians, especially in the humbler walks of life, to be exempted for a season from the *hard toil* in which they are at other times almost incessantly employed? Persons who cherish a considerate and kindly regard for human nature in its labour and weariness, and who think of the continued efforts which some are compelled to make, early and late, to procure daily sustenance for themselves, and for those who, in the order of Providence, are dependent upon them, will rejoice that such a day of rest is provided—that on one day in seven man may pause from toil, and taste the sweets of undisturbed quiet. The language of God's own command on this subject expresses a condescending and merciful regard to man in every station, not excepting the lowest, and even to beasts—a regard which claims our most thankful attention. "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day *thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thine handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed*"—"that," as you elsewhere read, "*thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.*"—(Exod. xxiii. 12; Deut. v. 14.) When a Christian man is closing his weekly labours, what-

ever those labours may have been, and particularly if they have been severe, what a solace it is for him to think, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord;" it is "the Sabbath of rest—the Sabbath of the Lord in all our dwellings!"—(Exod. xvi. 23; Lev. xxiii. 3.) He welcomes that rest; he values the comfort which it brings to his weary nature, and he seeks to enjoy its yet higher advantages.

Is it not also a relief, of which considerable numbers of Christians cannot but be deeply sensible, to cease awhile from the incursions of *cares* and *anxieties* which, in many posts of life, are so apt to assail them—to harass and distract the mind if they remit the spirit of vigilance and self-recollection—to fatigue it in all its thoughts and powers—and to damp or abate the flame of habitual devotion? This respite, also, the Sabbath brings. When that day dawns upon the Christian disciple, he is taught by duty, and invited by privilege, to wake, not to the perplexities which so often beset and obstruct his daily path, but to a season of peace—to a cessation from all that might otherwise embarrass and disturb his meditations on better things. He is instructed and encouraged to lay aside earthly cares with earthly employments, and to find, in this temporary relaxation, a needful refreshment for the soul as well as for the body. With what a grateful feeling may he say, on the calm morning of the Sabbath, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee?"—(Ps. cxvi. 7.) And how delightfully may he learn, amidst the tranquil engagements and privileges of that day, to resign himself to the consolatory direction, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God!"—(Phil. iv. 6.) Cares and anxieties will indeed follow the Christian, and seek to intrude themselves into the sanctities of the Sabbath. But in the special aids of that day he finds a remedy for them. He spreads his sacrifice of a spiritual ser-

vice before the Lord; and if, like the "fowls" in the case of Abraham's offerings, busy, intermeddling, anxious cares should "come down" to mar that sacrifice, he learns, with the patriarch's watchfulness and promptitude, to "drive them away," while he also waits until the Lord passes by in the sure signs and tokens of His presence, and especially in the "burning lamp" of covenant truth and peace.—(Gen. xv. 11, 17, 18.)

Is it not, yet further, a relief to be separated for one day in seven from the *bustle* and *turmoil* of worldly society and intercourse, which tends so forcibly to draw down the mind to earthly things, and to restrain or impede its flight to things Divine and heavenly? Christians are often called, in the ordinary commerce of life, to interchange sentiments, words, and actions, with persons "who mind," who relish, affect, and pursue "earthly things" (Phil. iii. 19), and earthly things only. How can they be otherwise than sensible of the influence which such persons diffuse around them in their habitual tempers, maxims, and usages? They breathe, and they feel that they breathe, an atmosphere impregnated with much that is evil; and who but themselves can tell how reviving it is to escape from such an atmosphere into one more balmy and pure? But in these times especially, when so many are daily assembled together in large masses to pursue their joint occupations, Christians are not unfrequently exposed to taunts, opposition, and manifold reproach from persons who encourage and harden each other in their resistance of all that is good. They sometimes find it no easy matter to maintain their firmness and consistency, and not supply any occasion of offence. Are there not seasons when many a one of them is constrained to say, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war?" —(Ps. cxx. 5-7.) And is not the wish occasion-

ally extorted, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo! then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest?"—(Ps. lv. 6-8.) To the man who is thus surrounded, during the week, with what tries and distresses him, the Sabbath opens a welcome refuge—an asylum of security and peace. He can rest in its quiet observances, and can turn in meek confidence to Him who will "hide" His people "in the secret of his presence from the pride of man," and "keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."—(Ps. xxxi. 20.) It is as if, in the journeyings of the wilderness, he came like Israel to "Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees;" and like them, also, he rejoices for the season which the Lord graciously assigns to him, to "encamp there by the waters," that, re-invigorated and comforted, he may resume his pilgrimage with alacrity, following "the pillar of the cloud," which the Lord will not take away "by day," and "the pillar of fire," which he will not take away "by night, from before the people."—(Exod. xv. 27, xiii. 22.) If the Christian man, then, experience on the Sabbath, in accordance with its own merciful provisions and designs, such relief from toil, from care, and from that worldly intercourse which exposes him to pain and detriment, is it not for this reason a *happy* day—a day of *blessing*—a day which affords welcome opportunities of rest and good?

II. The Sabbath is a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*, to the Christian man, because it is a day which, in its own institution and objects, DIRECTLY SUGGESTS TOPICS OF MOST PLEASING AND EDIFYING MEDITATION—topics, indeed, which comprehend no small portion of Divine truth.

Why was the Sabbath instituted? One reason assigned for its particular observance by the children of Israel is, their deliverance from the bondage of

Egypt, which seems, as Ainsworth thinks, to have been accomplished on the Sabbath-day, and which, as he adds, "was a figure of deliverance out of spiritual bondage by Christ."* "Remember," says the law of the ten commandments, as recited in the Book of Deuteronomy, "that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day."—(Deut. v. 15.) But this reason was comparatively of a local and temporary nature. The more general reasons, which extend to mankind at large, and which know no limits of place or time, are, that the Sabbath was first instituted to recall the memory of *creation*—that it was afterwards instituted, with a change of the day, to celebrate the work of *redemption*, finished and confirmed—and that, in each of its institutions, it was intended to supply a pledge and foretaste of the future rest of *glory*. The topics, then, to which the Sabbath in its immediate appointment and purpose invites our attention are—*Creation, Redemption, Glory;*—*Creation*, which is the birth of being in its several kinds and orders; *Redemption*, which yields provision for man's full recovery, by whom, through sin, the bliss of being had been forfeited and lost; and *Glory*, in which all our good shall be for ever consummated and crowned. Let us, for a short space, dwell upon these topics.

The Sabbath recalls the memory of *Creation*, which the Sabbath first of all instituted was expressly designed to celebrate. "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." "And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." For this reason it was that He "blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—(Gen. i. 31, ii. 2, 3. Compare Exod. xx. 11, xxxi. 17; Heb. iv. 4.) The Sabbath was

* See Ainsworth on Deut. v. 15, compared with his note on Exod. xx. 10.

therefore appointed to commemorate the Lord's rest from creation, and to recall to man's mind the amazing act of creation itself—that act of His who "spake, and it was done"—who "commanded, and it stood fast."—(Ps. xxxiii. 9.) When the Lord rested, did He not review the works of His own hands? and did He not require that man, placed at the head of this lower world, bearing his Maker's image, and set apart to minister in His service, should survey creation, and adore its author? Man was formed by the Lord for himself, and formed to "show forth his praise."—(Isa. xliii. 21.) It is his prerogative, beyond all that inferior creatures possess, to give utterance to the praises of creation, and to offer spiritual and supreme worship to Him who "hath prepared his throne in the heavens," and whose "kingdom ruleth over all."—(Ps. cxi. 19.) "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein."—(Ps. ciii. 2.) And when such as these have taken the largest and most exact view of them, how truly may they exclaim, "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." "How manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord!"—(Ps. xcii. 5, civ. 24, xxxiii. 5.) Who that contemplates the mighty sweep and compass of created being—the structure of the heavens and the earth, with their several inhabitants and furniture—all that is vast, all that is minute, all that is complicate—each system with its own peculiar wonders—and the magnificent universe of systems wrought into one harmonious whole—sustained by the hand, regulated by the skill, and filled with the blessing, of the Lord—who that contemplates these can fail to be affected with the proofs which creation everywhere presents of the glorious perfections and imperative claims of the Most High? "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;" so that even

pagans, unenlightened by the gift of a direct and written revelation, "are without excuse," if they "hold the truth," which these witnesses for God supply "in unrighteousness."—(Rom. i. 20.) But let all Christians unite with the "four-and-twenty elders," who "worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns," with themselves, before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—(Rev. iv. 10, 11.) Is it not happy—is it not improving—when Christians cease from their own temporal works, while they, at the same time, raise their minds in devout meditation to the works of their almighty Father and Friend, and when they joyfully ascribe to "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth," the glory "which is due unto His name?"—(Isa. xl. 28; Ps. xxix. 2.) Shall we not remember the *Sabbath of Creation*, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"—(Job xxxviii. 7.) "The heavens are thine," O Lord; "The earth also is thine."—(Ps. lxxxix. 11.)

But the Sabbath, in its institution under the Evangelical economy, leads us more especially to celebrate the work of *Redemption*, now finished and confirmed. Every Christian Sabbath may be ushered in with that glad declaration, "The Lord is risen indeed!"—(Luke xxiv. 34.) He who condescended to become man's representative, "the last Adam, a quickening spirit—the second man, the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47); He who, "in the mystery of his holy incarnation," assumed our nature and sojourned on our earth; He who, for our sakes, "humbled himself" to a yet deeper abasement, "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philp. ii. 8); He who, "once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"—first, "to minister," and then, "to give his life a ransom for many" (Heb. ix. 26;

Mark x. 45); He "is risen!" for He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."—(Rom. iv. 25.) The resurrection of Jesus is the great miracle of Christianity; and as following His most meritorious death, and inseparable from it, forms a prime part of the apostles' testimony. They were "witnesses of his resurrection;" and, in the execution of their office, "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."—(Acts i. 22, iv. 33.) When St. Paul was at Athens, "he preached Jesus and the resurrection."—(Acts xvii. 18.) And St. Peter ascribes blessing to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" for this unspeakable gift, that, "according to his abundant mercy," He "hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—(1 Pet. i. 3.) "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ," who "is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept," "shall all be made alive;" for He is "the resurrection and the life."—(1 Cor. xv. 20, 22; John xi. 25.) Can you dwell on the theme of our Lord's resurrection without adverting to the entire scheme of redeeming grace, of which that resurrection is so glorious a seal and ratification? Do you not also, in that great event, see a chosen emblem of man's spiritual resurrection from death to life? How powerful are the instructions connected with this particular lesson! "As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."—(Rom. vi. 4, 11; Col. iii. 1.) Are we not, yet further, invited and encouraged to look forward to the future resurrection of the saints, of which the resurrection of Jesus may be regarded as at once the proof, the pattern, and the pledge?

What prospects rise to the eye of faith and hope!—prospects of the regeneration and renewal of all things by the omnipotent power of our risen Lord. Creation is tainted and injured by the sin of man; and by sinful man it cannot now be contemplated with unmixed delight. Its groans are heard; its painful travail is felt. But when we think of Jesus raised and for ever exalted, we may think of creation too, renovated, restored, and invested with unfading glory. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."—(Rev. xxi. 5.) Visions and assurances of this recovery of creation from the burden of sin and death are also granted. "I saw a new heaven," says St. John, "and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—(Rev. xxi. 1.) "We, according to his promise," writes St. Peter, "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—(2 Peter iii. 13.) Shall we not, then, remember the *Sabbath of Redemption*, and humbly triumph in the provisions which our crucified and risen Saviour has made for man's full recovery to God, as also for the reparation of all the injuries which sin has inflicted on the works of creation, once so beautiful and pure? Great as it was originally to create, it is acknowledged to have been yet greater to redeem and restore. Let the Sabbath remind us, above all things, of our Christian redemption; and let us not forget the high praises of "the Lord God of Israel," who "hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us."—(Luke i. 68, 69.)

Once more: The Sabbath supplies us with a pledge and foretaste of the future rest of *Glory*, where the true followers of our Lord shall for ever "rest from their labours."—(Rev. xiv. 13.) This is emphatically called "*His* rest," and "*My* rest," the rest of God himself. "A promise is left of entering into it;" and the exhortation is enjoined upon us, "Let us labour to enter into that rest.—(Heb. iv.

1, 3, 5, 11.) When the working-days of time are over—when the Sabbath of Sabbaths, the Sabbath of eternity, shall have come—when the Church, now militant on earth, shall, not in joyous anticipation only, but in full communion, join "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven" (Heb. xii. 23)—when the "restitution of all things" shall appear (Acts iii. 21)—then shall the Lord's rest be finally gained, and then shall the Christian man "cease from his own works, as God did from his."—(Heb. iv. 10.) But who can form a due estimate of that future rest? Generally, indeed, we may say that it will be a rest from all spiritual danger and apprehension, from the assaults of sin and the pressure of infirmity, from the allurements and trials of temptation, from the artifices and efforts of evil men and evil spirits, and, in a word, from every peril of the wilderness which we are now called to traverse. "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places."—(Isa. xxxii. 18.) We may also say that it will be a rest from toil, pain, and molestation, from the hard travel of our earthly journey, from suffering of body, from anguish of spirit, from perplexity, and all inquietude. "Thou shalt weep no more."—(Isa. xxx. 19.) "I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away."—(Rev. xxi. 3, 4.) Yet, again, we may say that it will be a rest with God in Christ; for which reason, in part at least, it is perhaps emphatically called "*His rest*"—the rest which He provides, the rest which He bestows, the rest which He himself ineffably possesses. How will man's intellectual powers rest in

the calm contemplation of His glory, who unveils all knowledge, all wisdom, all truth! The shadows of time will then pass away; toilsome and uncertain investigations shall cease; the saints shall "see light" in "God's light."—(Ps. xxxvi. 9.) "When that which is perfect is" thus "come," they shall "see face to face," and "know even as also they are known."—(1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12.) How will man's affections rest in the full fruition of His love, who is "mighty," who "will save," who "will rejoice over" His people "with joy," and "will rest in his love!" —(Zeph. iii. 17.) How shall man's active powers rest in ceaseless services, which occupy but cannot tire, when the saved of the Lord shall "serve him day and night in his temple" (Rev. vii. 15), when they shall rest from labour, but shall never rest from praise! Meditations like these we may employ on the heavenly rest, though we are constrained to feel that, in reference to this high subject, we do indeed "see through a glass darkly," and "know" but "in part." Is not the Sabbath on earth a happy day, and a day of blessing, when it yields an earnest of that future Sabbath of heaven? Can a Christian man, who regards the Lord's-day in this light, fail to obtain a higher degree of heavenly-mindedness, and to see what just occasion he has to refresh his worn and weary spirit with the prospect and assurance that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall" His faithful followers "also appear with him in glory," and "shall be like him," in the clear discoveries and assimilations of that vision beatific; "for they shall see him as he is?"—(Col. iii. 4; 1 John iii. 2.) Let us, then, direct our thoughts to the *Sabbath of Glory*, in which every other Sabbath shall finally issue; and let us reflect that if the Sabbath, in the direct lessons of its own several institutions, teaches us to recall the memory of creation, to celebrate the mercies of redemption, and to anticipate the rest of future glory, it cannot but, for this reason also, be a *happy* day.

III. The Sabbath is a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*, to the Christian man, because it is a day of THE MOST CHOSEN AND PROFITABLE EMPLOYMENT, in which the views which we have already advanced find a fit and practical application.

There is the *public worship of God*, to which the Christian rejoices to devote a due share of the rest which he has obtained from worldly toil, care, and intercourse, and in which he has most seasonable aid in his contemplation of things Divine. Is it no privilege, no blessing, to repair to the Lord's house, to mingle with the companies of His worshippers, to engage in singing His high praises, to unite in prayer and supplication, to hear the truths of Holy Scripture expounded and applied, to commemorate our Saviour's dying love, and to attend all the other ordinances which beautify and bless our Christian sanctuaries? The language of the Lord's servants on this subject, under an inferior and preparatory dispensation, declares how they valued the blessings of His house. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."—(Ps. cxxii. 1, xxvi. 8, xxvii. 4.) Right-minded Christians delight to entertain such sentiments as these, and to know how applicable they are to the economy under which we are permitted to live. When they return from the happy and improving exercises of public worship, are not they also heard to say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness?"—(Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 10.) Prophecies which speak of the glory of the latter day, mention this, which man is so apt to despise and

neglect, as a conspicuous sign of that glory. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths."—(Isa. ii. 2, 3.) "Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also."—(Zech. viii. 21.) It is in the Lord's house especially, and amidst the solemnities of His worship, that the snares of temptation are broken, that the oppressive weight of trial is relieved, that the "end" of the wicked in prosperity, as well as of the righteous in affliction, is more clearly discerned (Ps. lxxiii. 17); and that the Lord's dispensations, in providence and grace, so marvellously appear, that His people are constrained to say, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?"—(Ps. lxxvii. 13.) Public worship, then, marks the Sabbath as a happy day.

But there are likewise the privileges of *searching the Scriptures in private*, of *reading useful books on practical religion*, of *engaging in peaceful meditation*, and of *applying everything to ourselves, and our own particular cases, in retired devotion*. It is in these exercises, annexed to the offices of public worship, or intermingled with them, that a Christian man may inspect his own state, note his failings and declensions, reconsider the truth of God in its adaptation to his particular wants, and obtain, by this means, too, a renewal of his spiritual strength. Public ordinances, as we have endeavoured to show, are of unspeakable value; but their value is more fully experienced and secured when they are associated with seasons of private retirement. When public ordinances alone are attended, and are crowded together with little or no discrimination or interval, they may, through a person's inadvertency and

misuse of them, lead to a dissipated rather than to a composed and tranquil state of mind. But when accompanied and interchanged with the observance of private duties, their own profit is more largely enjoyed. Truth shines with a brighter lustre, right impressions are deepened and strengthened, holy purposes are matured, and the real edification of the Christian life is advanced. "Enter," then, on the Lord's-day, but not on the Lord's-day only, "into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."—(Matt. vi. 6.) "Hide" the "Word" of God in your "heart," that you may "not sin against him," and that "none" of your "steps may slide."—(Ps. cxix. 11, xxxvii. 31.) "Search and try" your "ways, and turn again to the Lord. Lift up" your "heart with" your "hands unto God in the heavens."—(Lam. iii. 40, 41.) Let your "meditation of him be sweet," and seek to be "glad in the Lord."—(Ps. civ. 34.) They who avail themselves in such a way as this of the opportunities which the Christian Sabbath affords with intercourse with truth, themselves, and God, in a temporary withdrawment from the society of others, will prove in the end that, for this reason as well as the former one, the Sabbath is a happy day.

One consideration yet remains, that, on the Lord's-day, there are *offices of mercy to the ignorant, sick, and poor*, in which Christians have the privilege of imparting instruction, comfort, and relief, and to which, in their proper place and order, we are invited to attend, with the expectation of a blessing, not only to others, but to ourselves. The great Lawgiver of the Church has decided that "it is lawful to do well," or "to do good," "on the Sabbath-days."—(Matt. xii. 12; Mark iii. 4; Luke vi. 9.) And who can doubt or deny the happiness attendant on doing good? If the Sabbath is a day of Christian beneficence, it is, on that ground, a blessed day. But to

guard against misapprehension and mistake on this particular topic, it is needful that we examine the law of the Sabbath, as it has been interpreted by our Saviour, and prescribed by his authority to His disciples. Can any quote His language as giving encouragement to persons who, on the Lord's-day, pursue *works of pleasure, works of temporal emolument and gain to themselves*, or even *works* which may be classed under the general head of *charity*, but which partake too largely of a secular character for the Christian Sabbath, and which might be more fitly and advantageously performed at other times. The works which he allows on the Sabbath may be reduced to three classes—*works of necessity, works of religion, and works of mercy*; —*works of necessity*, as when a sheep, an ass, or an ox shall "fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day," and its owner shall "lay hold on it, and lift it out," or "straightway pull it out," to rescue it from a jeopardy so threatening (Matt. xii. 11; Luke xiv. 5)—*works of religion*, as when "on the Sabbath-days the priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and were blameless, and as when "a man on the Sabbath-day receives circumcision" (Matt. xii. 5; John vii. 23)—and *works of mercy*, as when Jesus restored the helpless and unfriended sufferer at the Pool of Bethesda, who had laboured under "an infirmity thirty and eight years" (John v. 5-9)—as when He healed the man "whose right hand was withered," a miracle which three evangelists record (Matt. xii. 10-13; Mark iii. 1-5; Luke vi. 6-10) —as when He opened the eyes of him "that was born blind," a thing that had not been "heard since the world began" (John ix.)—as when He "made" that poor woman "straight," who for eighteen years had been "bowed together" by a spirit of infirmity, and "could in no wise lift up herself" (Luke xiii. 11-13)—and as when, in the house of "one of the chief Pharisees" He "took" the man who had the dropsy, "and healed him, and let him go."—(Luke xiv. 1-4.) He vindicated the conduct of His dis-

ciples, who, to appease the cravings of hunger, "began to pluck the ears of corn" on a Sabbath-day, "and to eat;" and to "the ruler of the synagogue," who "answered with indignation because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath-day," he said, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?"—(Luke xiii. 14, 15.) Works of considerate kindness are due on the Sabbath-day to cattle; and much more are they due to man. But let every one beware lest he pervert this Evangelical law of the Sabbath. Shall works under the plea of *necessity* be multiplied *beyond necessity?* Is it right and seemly that, in performing works of *religion*, Christian ministers or Christian people should engage in uncalled-for journeyings, or in other toils which might well be spared without detriment to religious duty and privilege? Ought works of mercy themselves to be so crowded into the Lord's-day as not to leave sufficient time for its other prerogatives? Duties need not clash. None ought to excuse themselves from a due attendance on the public and private means of grace and spiritual improvement, under the pretext of being fully occupied with works of charity. There is space for each and for all; and in offices of mercy sweetly blended with offices of religion how many blessings may a Christian find!

From a review of all that has been advanced, we may securely rest in this conclusion—that if the Sabbath provides such relief from toil, care, and intercourse with worldly men and worldly things—if it leads our thoughts, in its very institution, to the great truths which are associated with creation, redemption, and glory—and if, in its appointed ordinances and services, it engages us in the offices of public worship, of private reading, meditation, and devotion, and of mercy to the ignorant, sick, and needy, it cannot be any other, when observed in a right manner, and with a proper regard to its own merciful design, than a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing*.

Who can tell how largely it contributes, by the gift of Him from whom all good comes, to the promotion of religion in individuals, and, in its wider and more diffusive influences, among communities at large?

Shall not *professed Christians*, then, be more particularly careful of its Scriptural observance? Is it not their duty and advantage so to arrange and settle their temporal affairs that these may never be allowed to trench, directly or indirectly, on the sacred hours of the Sabbath? Ought not they to seek a preparation of mind and heart for the grateful and profitable employments to which that day invites them? Is it not of importance to them that they should sedulously guard against everything which might rob them of Sabbath good, and strive to avail themselves of the several privileges which each returning Sabbath yields? The more Christians value and use the Sabbath for its own peculiar purposes, the more will they themselves prosper in spiritual attainments—the more will the Church in general prosper—and the more will heedless persons be likely to be impressed by the force of example, with some sense of the sanctity and happiness of a day which they have so criminally disregarded and profaned. It is related of the excellent Philip Henry, that "the Lord's-day he called and counted the 'queen of days,' and observed it accordingly. He would say sometimes to those about him, when he had gone through the duties of a Sabbath, 'Well, if this be not the way to heaven, I do not know what is.' In pressing people to remember their days, he would especially exhort them to number their Sabbath-days, how many they have been, and how ill they have been spent; how few it is likely they may be, that they might be spent better; and to help in the account, he would say, 'That for every twenty years of our lives we enjoy above a thousand Sabbaths, which must be accounted for in the day of reckoning.'"

Is it not the duty of *persons who plead for what*

they may term recreation on the Lord's-day, to pause and consider? Are they not proving themselves, far as this may be from their intention, to be *adverse to man's free happiness?* If they allege that the advocates of the Sabbath are seeking to make it a day of pharisaical strictness, austerity, and gloom, we would ask, Do they really and seriously believe their own allegation? Can they forget that those who most prize the Sabbath, prize it because it is a *happy* day, or a day of *blessing?* When it is contended that people may allowably indulge themselves on the Lord's-day in journeys of pleasure, in parks, and other entertainments, ought the many who toil to provide these unseasonable gratifications, and to whom the Sabbath itself brings no relaxation or relief, to be lost sight of in the question? What recreation have they? Is it not of consequence also to reflect on the money which is expended in these pursuits; on the pernicious society into which persons, and especially young persons, are so often thrown; on the temptations to which they are exposed, and the evils into which many of them almost inevitably fall; and on the various miseries which are thus entailed on individuals, on families, and sometimes on yet larger societies of mankind? As a brief experiment, let any one go, on a Monday morning, to those who have wasted the Sabbath in worldly pleasure, recreation, and revelry, and let him then go to those who have spent it as a day which the Lord has "blessed" and "sanctified." Is there no difference? none in the persons themselves, in their connexions, in their preparation for the several claims and duties of life? May we not even now, and in many instances connected with the profanation of the Sabbath on the one hand, and its devout observance on the other, "return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not?"—(Mal. iii. 18.) Sabbaths of dissipation cannot be Sabbaths of blessing.

Man's happiness is found in the favour and service of God. That favour is life—that "service is perfect freedom." Let all then, who cultivate sincere benevolence towards man, and desire to promote his proper bliss, while they, at the same time, form a right estimate of the provisions which God himself has made to bestow and protect that bliss, maintain the sacred claims of God's own day. Let them do it by precept, by example, and by encouragement, as heads or members of families, and as parts of the general community. Let them do it from a motive of supreme love to God, and of the kindliest charity to man. Let them not fear the charge of singularity; let them not be swayed or shaken by evil maxims and evil patterns, wherever they may be heard or seen; and let them not listen to the solicitations of worldly gain. If opposed, let them be firm! if disappointed in some of their most cherished hopes, yet let them meekly persevere; and if unexpected and apparently insurmountable difficulties arise, let them remember how easily the Lord can remove these, or even press them into the service of His own cause. "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."—(Gal. iv. 18.) And to the patient, mild, and affectionate spirit of a truly Christian zeal, what obstacle can be regarded as formidable or invincible? Passion is weak, but principle is strong. Let Christians rest on the principle of truth, combined with the feeling of prompt and assiduous charity; let them be "steadfast" in what is right, and "unmovable" by what is wrong; and let them "not be weary in well-doing," with respect either to this or any other province of faithful service; "for in due season" they will "reap, if" they "faint not."—(Gal. vi. 9.)

VIII.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES ON THE SUBJECT OF SABBATH OBSERVANCE, SHOWING ITS INFLUENCE ON THE PIETY OF INDIVIDUALS.

BY WILLIAM INNES,

MINISTER OF ELDER-STREET CHAPEL, EDINBURGH.

In writing a treatise on this subject, it must be manifest to every one that the great difficulty is to select examples, among the many that occur, of the close connexion between the observance of the Sabbath and the influence of personal piety. I rather put the case so, because I conceive the influence is reciprocal. Where there is personal piety it will lead to the observance of the Sabbath; and this observance will, in its turn, keep alive and strengthen the piety from which it flows. the first case I mention is that of

SIR MATTHEW HALE.

Sir Matthew Hale, an eminent English Judge, speaking of the Sabbath, gives the following as the result of his own experience:—"God Almighty is the Lord of our time, and lends it to us; and, as it is right that we should consecrate this part of that time to Him, so I have found, by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of the duty of this day has ever had joined to it a blessing on the rest of my time; and the week that has been so begun has been blessed and prosperous to me; and, on the other hand, when I have been negligent of the duties of this day, the rest of the week has been unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular employments; so that I could easily make an estimate

of my success in my own secular employments, the week following, by the manner of my passing this day; and this I do not write lightly or inconsiderately, but upon a long and sound observation and experience."

THE REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

The next example I quote of the connexion between eminent piety and a sacred observance of the Sabbath, is President Edwards, of America. How much he was distinguished by personal devotedness to the service of God, is known to all who are even slightly acquainted with his character and history; but he was no less distinguished by a most conscientious regard to the observance of the Sabbath. He had such exalted views of the importance of improving every portion of the sacred day, that, to my best recollection, his biographer mentions that he carefully made such family arrangements as to have the sacred hours as little interrupted as possible. I cannot notice this without observing how truly worthy it is of imitation. The comfort and edification connected with attending Divine ordinances, or even improving the other parts of the day, much depends on such arrangements. He carefully avoided all frivolous or worldly conversation. This appears from the seventy resolutions he wrote in early life, as those by which he was determined, through grace, to regulate his conduct.

The following are a specimen of these, and sufficiently show the devotedness of the writer:—

"Resolved, Never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor *be* nor *suffer* it, if I can possibly avoid it.

"Resolved, Never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

"Resolved, Never to utter anything that is sportive, or matter of laughter, on the Lord's-day."

Many a reader will here be apt to exclaim,

"Well, this is too strict; it is carrying things too far!" I am aware there is no religion in gloom; that the Sabbath is a festal day; and that everything in Christianity is calculated to inspire the mind with cheerfulness, gratitude, and joy. But if this resolution should seem to present one extreme, how often is there a danger of running into the opposite? Frequently have we observed, that if one amusing or ludicrous incident is introduced, the example becomes infectious; it suggests others; and it thus throws the mind off its proper balance, and leads to trains of thought that are by no means in keeping with the duties and exercises of the day; and such as on the retrospect can never be satisfactory. While it becomes Christians to manifest that cheerfulness and holy joy which they are called to feel and cherish—avoiding any approach to moroseness on the one hand, and unbecoming levity on the other; I would say the former extreme is less dangerous than the latter. The one will produce no painful recollection on a death-bed; the other may.

JOHN HOWARD.

This name cannot be mentioned without calling up, in every well-constituted mind, the warmest feelings of veneration, affection, and esteem. All are acquainted with his unrivalled philanthropy, and the efforts and sacrifices that he made to carry his original plans of benevolence into effect; but he is here quoted on account of his sacred regard to the Sabbath; and how he spent that holy day, is seen from the following extracts from his diary.

I am happy to be able first to introduce here an original anecdote regarding this great and good man. It is one which I heard mentioned in early life by the late Rev. Dr. Erskine of this city, a clergyman that will be long remembered as an eminent ornament of the Scottish Church, and who was equally distinguished by theological literature and personal piety.

Mr. Howard, having been introduced to Dr.

Erskine when he visited Edinburgh, dined with him in the course of the week, after having been one of his hearers on the preceding Sabbath. On that occasion, the doctor had been discoursing on the imputed righteousness of Christ as the only foundation of a sinner's hope. Mr. Howard took occasion to introduce the subject; and, after mentioning the satisfaction with which he had heard the discourse, he distinctly referred to this doctrine as the source of his own comfort and hope, as well as the spring of all his public labours.

How he was employed on the Sabbath, is seen from the following extract. When at the Hague, he inserted the following remarks in his memorandum-book: "Hague, 1770, Sunday Evening, 11th Feb.—I would record the goodness of God to the unworthiest of His creatures. For some time past an habitual serious frame, relenting for my sin and folly, applying to the blood of Jesus Christ, solemnly surrendering myself and babe to Him, begging the conduct of His Holy Spirit. I hope a more tender conscience, by a greater fear of offending God—a temper more abstracted from this world—more resigned to death or life—thirsting for union and communion with God as my Lord and my God. Oh! the wonders of redeeming love! Some faint hope even I, through redeeming mercy in the perfect righteousness, the full atoning sacrifice, will ere long be made the monument of the rich free grace and mercy of God, through the Divine Redeemer. Oh! shout, my soul, grace, grace, free, sovereign, rich, and unbounded grace! not I, not I, an ill-deserving, hell-deserving creature! but where sin has abounded I trust grace superabounds; some hope—what joy in that hope—that nothing shall separate my soul from the love of God in Christ Jesus; and my soul, as such a frame is thy delight, pray frequently and fervently to the Father of spirits to bless His Word and your retired moments to your serious conduct in life. Let not, my soul, the interests of a moment engross thy

thoughts, or be preferred to my eternal interests. Look forward to that glory which will be revealed to those who are faithful to death. My soul, walk thou with God; be faithful, hold on, hold out—and then—what words can utter."

I subjoin the following extract from his diary, as sufficiently indicating the Christian principles by which he was influenced:—

"Health, time, powers of mind, and worldly possessions, are from God; do I consecrate them all to Him? So help me, O my God!

"The peculiar doctrines of Christianity, the degradation of human nature, our inability to restore ourselves, our need of a Mediator and of Divine aid, are doctrines which strike at the root of vainglory; we are justified by faith, by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Where, then, is boasting? it is excluded.—(Rom. iii. 27.) Aim at what is praiseworthy, and then at the approbation of God, who alone is an impartial, infallible judge. Let it be my earnest inquiry how I shall best serve God in the station which he has assigned me."

Another fine specimen of his musing, on another Sabbath evening, March 15, 1760, we have in the following extract:—

"Our superfluities should be given up for the convenience of others—

"Our conveniences should give place to the necessities of others—

"And even our necessities give way to the extremities of the poor.

"O God! may the angel which conducted the Israelites through the desert, accompany and bless me!

"In all my dangers and difficulties may I have full confidence in that unseen power, to believe in hope, as the Lord orders all things; therefore I leave everything to Him, trusting He will always give His angels charge concerning me, and then I am equally safe in every place; therefore I will fear no evil, for thou art my God."

Again, he thus earnestly supplicates Divine assistance to support him in his course, and to enable him to finish with joy the race that was set before him:—

"O God! succour me in time of trial, and help me to maintain my integrity. My eyes are up to Thee, O God! to help me to encounter the danger. Leave me not to my own strength; but may I rely on Him in whom is everlasting strength! I come to the throne of God for mercy and help in time of need, and that I may finish my course in peace. Be diffident of yourself, and look up to God. Where there is most holiness there is most humility. Never does our understanding shine more than when it is employed in religion. In certain circumstances retirement is criminal—with a holy fire I would proceed. What is our profession of religion if it does not affect our heart? Shall I desert His cause and God? May I, through Divine grace, persevere to the end! My end, too, is approaching. Do Thou, O Lord! visit the prisoners and captives. Manifest Thy strength in my weakness. Help, Almighty God! for in Thee I put my trust, for Thou art my rock. I would rejoice in a sense of Thy favour. And may not even I hope that God, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, but that He shall not with Him freely give us all things, even me, life everlasting? The doctrine of merit is diametrically opposite to the genius of the Gospel. By grace we are saved; not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. My desire is to be washed, cleansed, and justified in the blood of Christ, and to dedicate myself to that Saviour who has bought us with a price."

Mr. Howard was seized with fever at Cherson, where he died. His friend, Admiral Priestman, having called upon him, he found him weak and ill, sitting before a stove in his bed-room. On inquiring after his health, he replied that his end was approaching very fast, that he had several things to say to him, and thanked him for having called upon him. The Admiral, concluding from his answers that he

was in a melancholy mood, endeavoured to turn the conversation, imagining the whole or the principal part of his disorder might be the mere effect of low spirits. Mr. Howard, however, assured him that it was not; and added, in a very impressive yet cheerful manner, "Priestman, you style this a dull conversasion, and endeavour to divert my mind from dwelling upon death, but I entertain very different sentiments. Death has no terrors for me; it is an event I always look to with cheerfulness, if not with pleasure; and be assured, the subject is more grateful to me than any other. I am well aware that I have but a short time to live." Then, turning from that subject, he spoke of his funeral, and cheerfully gave directions where he would be buried.

I have dwelt more particularly on the case of Howard, as, from his eminent philanthropy, he is justly a subject of universal admiration, and this must give a great weight to his example.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

The name of William Wilberforce cannot be mentioned without exciting similar emotions with those produced by the name of John Howard. But our object in introducing that name here is simply to show, by some extracts from his "Diary and Life," the sacred veneration he had for the Christian Sabbath, and how closely he considered the strict observance of it connected with personal piety.

"Often (says he) in my visits at Mr. Pitt's, when I heard one or another speak of this man's place, or that man's peerage, I felt a rising inclination to pursue the same objects; but a Sunday in solitude never failed to restore me to myself."

Again: "Sunday, 1790. Oh! blessed be God, who hath appointed the Sabbath, and interposes these seasons of serious recollection. Oh! what a blessed thing is Sunday, for giving us an opportunity of self-examination, retrospect, and drawing water out of the wells of salvation!"

In the winter of 1809, Mr. Wilberforce, undertaking a trip to Bath, wrote to Mr. Perceval to ascertain the day of the meeting of Parliament. "Parliament (was the reply) will not meet, unless something unforeseen should occur, until Monday, the 16th of January. I hope, then, you will lose no time in getting your health well set up at Bath." The watchfulness for public morals at once suggested to him the amount of public travelling which such a day of meeting would create; and he begged, in answer, that it might, if possible, be altered. "I thank you for your note of yesterday," rejoined the conscientious minister, "and am really sorry that I should have given occasion for it. I feel myself the more to blame, because the receipt of your note brought back to my recollection (which I had till then forgot) some observation which the Speaker made to me, some time ago, on the same subject; if they had been present to mind when we settled the meeting of Parliament, I would not have fixed it upon Monday. We were, however, almost drawn to that day." Two days after, he wrote again: "Dear Wilberforce, you will be glad to hear that it is determined to postpone the meeting of Parliament till Thursday, the 19th, instead of Monday, the 16th, to obviate the objections which you have suggested to the meeting on that day. Yours very truly—SPENCER PERCEVAL."

Mr. Wilberforce has in his diary, without any allusion to the part he had in it:—"The House put off nobly, by Perceval, because of the Sunday travelling it would have occasioned."

The following passage occurs in a letter to his sister:—"My judgment is decidedly and strongly in favour of your taking an early dinner on Sunday, and going to church in the afternoon. I do not say it lightly. I believe the contempt into which the Sabbath has fallen, bids fair to accelerate the ruin both of Church and State more than any other single circumstance whatever; and it is the bounden duty of every friend to our civil happiness, no

less than our religious interests, to hold up its authority."

Again, writing to Mr. Ashley, he says, "There is nothing in which I would warn you to be more stoutly resolute than keeping the Sabbath holy; and by this I mean, not only abstaining on that day from all unbecoming sports and common business, but from consuming time in frivolous conversation, paying or receiving visits, which, among relations, often leads to a sad waste of this precious day. Self-examination and much private prayer should never be omitted on this day. I can truly declare to you, that to me the institution of Sabbath has been most invaluable. I need not suggest, likewise, the duty of searching into our hearts on that day, examining ourselves as to our love of God and of Christ, and of purging out all malice and ill-will towards any one who may have offended us; trying likewise, when opportunity offers, to make peace. In all we should ever associate the idea of our blessed Master, and render Him as much as possible present to our minds."

At a time when the question has been agitated, Whether it would be more for the benefit, both of the individual and the community, to confine labour to six days, or extend it to seven?—it is interesting to find an opinion expressed by Mr. Wilberforce, many years ago, on this subject. It occurs in a letter to Christophe, King of Hayti, dated October 8, 1818.

After recommending to his people to abstain from their ordinary labours on the Sabbath, assuring him that at the year's end the sum of their labour will not be found to be lessened by this abstinence, he adds: "I well remember that, during the war, when it was proposed to work all Sunday in one of the Royal manufactories (for a continuance, not for an occasional service), it was found that the workmen who obtained Government consent to abstain from working on Sundays, executed in a few months even more work than the others."

Additional testimonies might be produced from his diary and correspondence, proving, in the most satisfactory manner, not only his sacred regard for the day of rest, but also showing the very exalted tone of Christian feeling which on that day he studied to maintain.

DR. CHALMERS.

The way in which this great and good man, who was so suddenly taken from us, enjoyed and spent the Sabbath, is very clearly seen from his solitary musings on that sacred day, recorded in the beginning of the lately published volume of his posthumous works, and which form a very interesting portion of that publication. We insert the following specimen:

"Edin., Aug. 30, 1835.—In reading the life of Sir Matthew Hale, I find that he employed the pen to aid him in his spiritual meditations. He wrote as he thought; and hitherto my attempts at the sustained contemplation of Divine things have been so confused and unsatisfactory, that I am glad to try the same expedient. May the Spirit of God, who worketh not without means, but by them, bless this humble endeavour after a nearer approach to the viewless objects of faith and eternity! Guard me, O heavenly Father! against the illusions of fancy. Suffer me not to walk in sparks of my own kindling. In thy light may I clearly see light; and let me never abandon the guidance and supreme authority of that Word which Thou hast exalted above all Thy name. Teach me the habit of communion with Thyself; and may those imperfect aspirations after Thee upon earth open the way for the full enjoyment of Thine immediate presence and of Thy revealed glory in heaven!"

"——. To express my religious state in one sentence:—I have a strong general desirousness towards God, though often suspended by the avocations of life, and daily overborne amidst its manifold and besetting influences. And it is a desirousness not satisfied—as if knocking at a door not yet opened,

with a sort of earnest and indefinite longing after a good not yet attained. Perhaps the experience I have oftenest realised is that of the Psalmist, when he said, 'My soul breaketh for the longing it hath unto thy judgments at all times.'"

"Oct. 2.—When in a state of physical exhaustion or discomfort, I am the more apt to give way under the power of any wrong or wayward instigation. On all hands I stand greatly in need both of prayer and watchfulness. O, my God! make me more habitual in my supplications at a throne of grace, and let me proceed on sanctification as a business. Oh, that I were more intent upon it! that I made it the distinct and the main object of my life, and suffered nothing to interfere with it! Let me not remit the cultivation of my heart, but give myself wholly thereto. And oh, that my converse in society, as well as my whole conduct in life, so bespeak the altogether Christian, that my life in itself should be a continual confession of the Saviour before men!"

In his observations on Exodus xxxi., Dr. C. thus writes:—

"Let me drink the spring of all that is here said about the Sabbath—an observance as much distinguished from the temporary and ceremonial law of Moses as any other of the decalogue. Let me never lose sight of the sign or memorial, first of creation and then of redemption. Let it, therefore, be upheld as part and parcel of a perpetual covenant—a day of holy rest, and the delighted observance of which is one of the most decisive tests of a renewed and godly nature. And let it not be a fatiguing but a reposing cessation from the toils and cares of the every-day world. And let such be my meditations and exercises, that I may not be exhausted, but strengthened and refreshed thereby."

THE LATE REV. CHARLES SIMEON.

The next case I select is that of the late Rev. Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, who was so bright

and shining a light in his day. I can speak of him more easily, from my having had the high privilege of enjoying his society under my roof, about half a century ago. It was manifest that he had a special regard for the sacred hours of the Sabbath, and kept at the greatest distance from any trifling or worldly conversation on that day. In one point of view, it was less conspicious in him than in others, because the whole tenor of his conversation was so spiritual, that it could be hardly said that any part would have been out of keeping with the sacred day of rest.

Let it not, however, be supposed from this that there was anything gloomy in it. Quite the reverse. There was a chastened liveliness which could not but delight every Christian who came into contact with him. He presented the idea of a faithful and zealous servant of Christ, truly happy in his own mind, deriving his happiness from the highest sources, and ever looking with Christian benignity on all around him. He was a fine illustration of that trying text—"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

In looking at this feature of Mr. Simeon's character, that his every-day conversation was becoming the day of rest, I am reminded of an objection which has been brought against the necessity of observing a special day—that with the Christian every day ought to be a Sabbath. This I have heard urged even by some good men, but surely without due consideration. Such must have forgotten that it is as much a Divine precept, "six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work," as that "on the seventh thou shalt rest." The rest and the labour are here contrasted, plainly indicating that what is proper, nay duty, in the one case, would be sinful in the other.

It has often been observed, that those who have made the highest attainments in the eyes of others are most deeply sensible of their own deficiency. This is finely illustrated in the history of this man of God. In a letter to a Christian friend, that occurs

in his "Life," lately published (a most interesting volume), he thus expresses himself: "What a blank, I should rather say a blot, is my whole life! God knoweth I loathe myself, and *that* because I cannot loathe myself more. The Lord send us better days!" Every Christian will understand this language, and none but a Christian can. We are here reminded of an anecdote told of the late Mr. Newton, of London. He had published three letters under the title of A, B, C, describing the progress of Divine grace in the soul—the last, of course, describing the highest attainments. He, some time afterwards, received a letter from a young clergyman, expressing a hope that he had reached this point. In reply, Mr. N. remarked, that he had unfortunately omitted one thing in that letter—that those who reached these attainments never knew it themselves.

THE REV. JOSHUA GILPIN.

One of the most lovely pictures I have met with of the consecration of the hours of the Sabbath to exercises appropriate for the day, is found in the following extract from a small but interesting volume, entitled, "A Monument of Parental Affection to a Dear and Only Son." By the Rev. Joshua Gilpin.

"Every day was a day of tranquil satisfaction, in which we had little to wish, and much to enjoy; but the Sabbath presented us with peculiar consolations. We saluted every return of that holy day with undissembled joy, cheerfully laying aside all our usual studies and employments, except such as had a manifest tendency, either to enlarge our acquaintance with, or advance our preparation for, the kingdom of God. It was a day truly honourable in our eyes, and marked as a season of sacred delights. Its various exercises, whether public or private, produced an exhilarating effect upon our minds, and never failed to set us some paces nearer the Object of our supreme desires. It was a kind of transfiguration-day, shedding a mild glory upon every creature,

and inviting us to view the concerns of time in connexion with those of eternity. Through all its happy hours we sat, as on the holy mount, looking backward with gratitude, and forward with confidence, taking sweet counsel together for the advancement of our highest interests, and scarcely considering ourselves as inhabitants of this lower world. The company of even our most intimate friends on these occasions, would have rendered our intercourse with each other more reserved, and our pleasure proportionably less lively: but, unrestrained by the presence of witnesses, we gave an unlimited indulgence to all our affectionate and devotional feelings. We conversed together as parts of the same family; we congratulated each other as members of the Christian Church; we rejoiced over one another as heirs of the same glorious promises. Some interesting passage of Scripture, or some choice piece of divinity, generally furnished the matter of our discourse; and while we endeavoured to obtain a clear and comprehensive view of the subject under consideration, a Divine light would sometimes break in upon us, satisfying our doubts, exalting our conceptions, and cheering our hearts. We have then, with one consent, laid aside our book, that we might uninterruptedly admire the beauties, and enjoy the sweets, of the prospect opening before us. And still, as the scene has become more luminous, we have proceeded from wonder to wonder, with a degree of delight far surpassing that which experimental philosophers ever felt on discovering some grand secret in the operations of nature. Through these flowery paths we have continued to allure each other onward (first one of us taking the lead, and then another), refreshing our spirits, and feeding our immortal hopes, amid a thousand glorious appearances—till the New Jerusalem itself has burst upon our eyes, even that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; whose inhabitants are the spirits of just men made perfect; and from whose holy walls we heard

the voice of harpers harping with their harps. Here our happy progress was stayed; and while standing to solace ourselves with a view of the goodly object before us, the scene of our future enjoyments, and the place of our final destination, we have solemnly renewed our vows, resolving, for the joy that was set before us, to endure the cross, despising the shame, in humble imitation of our adorable Master. In such a frame of mind, we found it possible to speak of probable sufferings and painful separations with the utmost composure. And with such a termination of our course in sight, we could cheerfully leave all the casualties of that course to the Divine disposal; fully persuaded that, whatever evil might befall us by the way, an abundant compensation would be made for all, on our arrival at home. Many a joyful Sabbath have we thus spent together, especially during the latter years of our Joshua's continuance with us. And now, when his mother and I are disposed, on the return of these sacred seasons, to look with regret towards his vacant place, we endeavour to animate each other with the hope of shortly following our dearest son to the celebration of that eternal Sabbath above, of which we have enjoyed so many sweet anticipations here below."

Where shall we find, in scenes of worldly mirth or amusement, anything that can furnish such a rational and exalted source of enjoyment, and which will so well bear the retrospect as in this?

THE MOTHER AND HER CHILDREN.

A good many years ago I had the pleasure of knowing an excellent Christian lady, who moved in the higher circles, who thus employed herself on the morning of the Sabbath:—Having a large family, she collected around her such of them as were able to engage in such an exercise; and after reading, or making them read, an appropriate passage of Scripture, accompanied with such a commentary as was suited to the capacities of her interesting little

charge, for which she had a peculiar talent, she commended them to God, praying for a blessing on the exercises of the day. It is impossible to conceive a better preparation for the services of the sanctuary. She has been for many years removed to her heavenly home; but, in so far as her family have grown up, a signal blessing seems to have attended her labours. We have here a fine model for the imitation of Christian mothers placed in similar circumstances.

With this account I connect a beautiful representation of a mother spending an hour of the Sabbath afternoon with her children, found in Abbott's "Young Christian." It is too long to quote at large, but it is in substance as follows:—Mamma proposes to Mary, the eldest girl, to spend an hour in looking back to the faults of the past week. She cheerfully agrees; and three or four of the children, from six to fifteen years, come round her. Mamma asks Mary if she recollects doing anything wrong; saying, "Now mention it or not, as you please." Mary thinks a little; at last says that "John and she had quarrelled in the nursery." John interposes, "But you know, Mary, you began." Mamma interferes, "Remember, my dears, we did not meet to revive former quarrels, and blame one another; but to improve for the future, and to guard against again doing what is wrong." She then prays with them for pardon for the past, and grace that they may be kept from future evil.

How much more likely is this kind of exercise to be useful than that stern severity which was often practised in a former age, when what was required was merely committing to memory some questions or portions of Scripture, without any explanation to render the exercise interesting; and when the memory of the child was so burdened as to make the Sabbath, instead of a day of rest, a day of more mental labour than any other day of the seven! Let it not be supposed by this observation, that we undervalue the importance of storing the memory with select passages of Scripture. It is a most useful exercise, as it

is matter of, I may almost say, universal experience, that portions thus committed in early life are rarely if ever forgotten. What we object to is, merely loading the memory, and thus creating disgust, without exercising the intellect. But this subject is now better understood; and, by a proper appeal to the understanding and the heart, what was formerly a day of weariness, is in many families a day of thankful relaxation from the incessant cares of life, and of genuine, calm, and peaceful enjoyment.

If I may be allowed to refer to my own observation (and I have had at least a pretty ample field, in a pastorate of more than half a century, and mingling with Christians of almost every denomination), I can confidently say that I never met with a truly pious man—one who, in the language of Scripture, was "spiritually-minded," and in the general tenor of his conduct showed that he was influenced by Divine authority — who had not a sacred regard to the day of rest, and who did not consider it an inestimable boon bestowed on man by its Divine author. This is so much the case, that if I find a man disposed to treat it with contempt, or even indifference, I should be disposed to move a previous question—Does such a man profess at all to acknowledge the authority of the Lord of the Sabbath? If not, I expect nothing from him but the desecration of it. An avowed infidel* acts in character in doing so, while his

* It is a melancholy fact, brought under our notice by our city missionaries, that the open avowal of infidelity is very prevalent among the working classes in the present day. It is much to be feared, in many such cases, the language of Dr. Johnson in reference to Foote, the comedian, is too applicable. When Boswell asked him, "Was not Foote an infidel?"—"Yes, Sir," he replied, "Foote was an infidel, as a dog is an infidel; he never thought on the subject." With others infidelity is resorted to as an apology for indulging in their licentious habits, which they know well Christianity condemns. There are others, who have much general information on other topics, and who profess to have in some degree examined the subject of religion, but many of whom, there is reason to fear, have read only on one side. I have at least met with some whose prejudices were so strong that they would listen to nothing on the other. They pick up a few objections to Christianity which have been refuted a hundred times. To these they tenaciously cling, but will not examine the reply to them. Surely, while such profess to be guided by reason, they

maxim is, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But suppose a man professes to acknowledge the Divine authority of Scripture, and what does he profess to admit? That we are immortal beings—that there is an inseparable connexion between this world and the next—that, as transgressors of the Divine law, all are under condemnation—that there is only one way of salvation, through faith in the atoning merits of Jesus—that those who thus believe must walk in newness of life—that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. These are great leading principles, in which, it will be admitted, that all who are entitled to the name of Christian are agreed. Now, looking at the great mass of the community, labouring from morning to night through the week for daily bread; while others in the better walks of life are equally harassed with the cares and pursuits of business—can it be viewed in any light than that

---

act here a very unreasonable part. They do themselves material injustice; or, to use a scriptural expression, "they wrong their own souls."

As it is not improbable that, from the intended extensive circulation of this treatise, it may fall into the hands of some who avow infidelity—could I obtain their ear I would kindly remind them there is a material difference between doubting that there is a future state of existence and a day of reckoning, and being certain there is none. This is what no man can be. *It may be found true* that there is. *It may be found* that there was sufficient evidence given on the subject. *It may so happen* that the man who had that evidence placed within his reach, and treated it with neglect and contempt, shall be found guilty. To such I would recommend a small volume that has been extensively circulated in this city, by the Scottish Association for Opposing Prevalent Errors, Dr. Bogue's "Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament;" and I would add one still smaller; "Lessons on the Christian Evidences."

Two instances of the happy result of a candid examination of the evidence in support of the Divine authority of the Bible have come under my own observation. The one was that of a barrister of highly respectable talents, extensive information, and much acuteness, who informed me that his attention had been, by some circumstances, directed to the subject of Christianity: and that, till he examined it he had no conception of the force of moral evidence by which it was supported. He added, that from all his conversation with his brethren at the bar, he was convinced that most of them had never paid any serious attention to the subject.

The other case was that of a gentleman distinguished by a most powerful mind, and who spent an ample fortune in diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel, simply as the result of a most minute and careful examination of the evidence of its Divine authority. He engaged in that examination on this principle: Christianity is everything or nothing. If it be true, it warrants every sacrifice and every effort to promote its influence. If it be not, let us give up the hypocrisy of professing to receive it. He rose from the perusal of the evidence with such a strength of conviction as manifested itself by the practical result already mentioned.

of a high privilege to have the day of rest devoted to the contemplation of subjects which, if a man reflects at all, are infinitely more important than any that can possibly occupy human thoughts? All that I ask here, then, to secure against the desecration of the Sabbath, and to lead a man highly to prize it as a privilege and a blessing, is *consistency*—consistency with his professed principles. That man violates the first principles of his rational nature, if he professes to believe the truths above stated, and allows his mind to be incessantly and supremely occupied with those objects which he knows perish with the using of them, while he allows to pass unregarded that vast futurity to which he is hastening; or who does not thankfully improve the precious hours of the Sabbath, by employing them in the most serious and deliberate consideration of the solemn scenes that lie before him.*

So obviously necessary and important is the insti-

I shall here add one more case, showing the happy effects of an avowed infidel being led to examine the Christian evidences. Though it is already before the public in a new series of "The Church in the Navy and Army," it will probably be new to most of my readers, and cannot, I think, fail to be interesting. It is entitled, "His Grace the Duke of Wellington the Instrument of the Conversion of an Infidel," but it might with great propriety have been called, "CANDID INQUIRY REWARDED."

"In the early part of His Grace's singularly successful career, when, as Sir Arthur Wellesley, in India, an officer dining at the mess where he presided was sporting his infidel sentiments, Sir Arthur, wishing to put down such conversation, said, 'S——, did you ever read Paley's Evidences?" The reply was in the negative. 'Well then,' said Sir Arthur, 'you had better read that book before you talk in the way you are doing.' The occurrence passed away, and the conversation was soon forgotten; but the reference to Paley's work led Colonel S——to inquire after it, and having obtained a copy, he read it with the most serious attention. He rose from the perusal of it with the fullest conviction of the falsehood of the system he had formerly adopted, and of the Divine origin of Christianity. But he did not stop here; he was determined to examine the book itself, which he was thus satisfied was a revelation from God. The result was, that he cordially received this revelation of mercy, saw and felt his need of a Saviour, and, believing in Jesus, became a Christian, not in name only, but in deed and in truth."

* I may here mention an incident which shows how our countrymen, forty years ago, valued the Sabbath as a day of rest. I had it from the late Mr. Brown, of Markle, an intelligent farmer in East Lothian, and then editor of the "Farmer's Magazine." One Saturday evening one of his ploughmen was heard to say, when he thought no one was present, when removing the harness from off one of his team, or, as a Scotchman would say, taking off the *graith*, "God be thanked, beast, that there is a Sabbath both for you and me!"

tution of the Sabbath, that had it not been found in Scripture, there would have been a material want, a *desideratum*—a something which needed to be supplied, to be in keeping with the rest of the book. The case would have stood thus: Every portion of Scripture reminds us of the vanity of this world, and the infinite importance of being prepared for the next. But while constantly and necessarily occupied with the business of this life, is it not of the most obvious importance that some time should be set apart for the serious contemplation of that which is to come? Should it be said, Let every man judge of this for himself, it is plain there would be no regular meeting for public worship, which is such a blessing to many, and so necessary to keep alive the influence of Divine truth in men's minds. If observed at all, one class would select one day, another, another; and the utmost confusion would prevail. Here we see the wisdom and goodness of a Divine and authoritative appointment on the subject, when one special day is by the great Lawgiver set apart for all. This very necessity of such an appointment, to follow out the design of the Bible, is no mean subsidiary argument that the institution is found there.

As some objects are best seen by contrast, I shall here mention two cases in which the contrast between the evil connected with desecrating the Sabbath, and the blessed effects that afterward resulted from the proper improvement of it, is finally brought out. These, I trust, will be considered quite in keeping with the design of this essay.

The first is that of John Williams, the distinguished missionary of the South Sea Islands. I the rather mention this case here, because it does not occur in that very fascinating book, his "Missionary Enterprises," but in his "Life"—a work less known. Not having the work by me, I cannot quote the author's words, but the facts are substantially these:—

In early life, Mr. Williams was a very thoughtless young man. He had made an oppointment with a

companion to spend the Sabbath evening at one of those places of amusement to which so many in London resort in the evening of the Lord's-day. They had agreed to meet at a particular part of the street. While he was lounging there, waiting for his companion, a pious lady who knew him, who was passing on her way to the evening service at the Tabernacle, accosted him, and invited him to accompany her. At first he seemed rather unwilling, but partly from being a little chagrined from his friend disappointing him, he agreed to go. This was the grand turning-point in his history. It pleased God that night to arrest him by His almighty grace—to show him his guilt and danger, and to bring him to the foot of the cross for mercy. From that night he became a changed man. On the subsequent steps in his history we do not enter. We only mention one incident. Having offered himself to the London Missionary Society, he was accepted, and sent to the Islands of the Pacific. Twenty years afterwards, when he returned from his mission, addressing a large audience in the Tabernacle, he spoke to this effect: "I can point out the very seat I occupied in this house on that memorable night when the Lord arrested me by His precious grace." Here we have a fine contrast between the previous desecration of the Sabbath, and the blessed effect of observing it by attending the public preaching of the Gospel. How conspicuously do we mark here the finger of God, in what appears so incidental! Had it not been for that interview, John Williams would, in all probability, have sunk into the grave with the mass of other Sabbath-breakers; and the name of this eminent missionary, and the martyr of Erromango, would have been for ever unknown.

The other case to which I refer, and which bears a considerable resemblance to the former, is one that occurred a good many years ago in London. A tradesman who had got into dissipated habits, was married to a pious wife. He frequently spent his

wages on Saturday evening, in drinking with his dissolute companions; and his wife naturally remonstrated with him, in bringing nothing home to support his family. On one occasion, instead of spending his wages in drinking, he spent them in gambling; but, in order to avoid the lecture he expected, he feigned himself drunk, and tumbled into bed. When in this state, he overheard his wife earnestly praying to God that He would arrest her poor, unhappy husband, show him his guilt and danger, and bring him to himself. This deeply affected him, and, though he still appeared to be asleep, he rose earlier than usual next morning, and, while he commonly spent his Sabbath with his dissipated companions, he desired his wife to get breakfast early, as he intended to go with her to chapel that day. The reader may conceive, if he can, the thrill of holy gratitude and joy which passed through the heart of this good woman at so unexpected an intimation. He did accompany her to the chapel; and *there* was fulfilled that declaration, "My words shall not return unto me void." He was awakened to a sense of his guilt, and led to the Saviour for mercy. The last information received regarding him was, that, if not a deacon, he was a respectable and consistent member of a Christian Church. What a blessing was it to this man—what a blessing to any man—to have a wife given to prayer.

To this case I shall add one which came under my own notice many years ago, which furnishes a striking illustration of the sad effects of desecrating the Sabbath, especially when it was done in the face of parental admonition.

A gay and thoughtless young man, who had often opposed a pious father's wishes, by spending the Sabbath in idleness and folly, instead of accompanying his parents to the house of God, had hired a horse to ride to the country on a Sabbath morning. After riding for some time at great speed, he hastily pulled up his horse, while the animal, by stopping

more suddenly than he expected, gave him such a sudden jerk, that it injured the spinal marrow; and when he came to his father's door, he had totally lost the use of the lower extremities of his body. He was lifted from the saddle, and laid on that bed which was destined to prove to him the bed of death; and there he had leisure to reflect on his ways. It was when in this situation I was asked to visit him; and he then discovered the deepest solicitude about the things that belong to his eternal peace. He eagerly listened to the representation that was given him of the evil of sin, its dreadful consequences, and the ground of hope to the guilty. He seemed much impressed with a sense of his need of pardoning mercy, and thankfully to receive it in the way that God hath revealed.

Many parts of the conversations I had with him have now escaped my recollection; but some of his expressions I shall not easily forget. On one occasion, when referring to his past life, and finding himself, at the time I visited him, unable to attend public worship, he exclaimed, "Oh! what would I give now for some of those Sabbaths which I formerly treated with contempt!" He seemed deeply to feel and to deplore his guilt in having so heinously misimproved the precious opportunities of waiting on the public ordinances of religion, which in the day of health he had enjoyed. While, on another occasion, he expressed his sense of the infinite importance of the Gospel, I suggested to him the propriety of his mentioning to his dissipated companions, when they called upon him, the light in which his former life now appeared to him. He told me in reply, that though he would be most happy to do so, he had no opportunity. His former companions had now quite deserted him; that if they called at all, it was merely to inquire about his health, but that they seemed quite uneasy while they remained, and would not spend even a few minutes in his company. Ah! what a picture of the friendship of the world! It

possesses no ingredients which can furnish a topic of consolation in the day of adversity. It was in reference, however, to this subject, and to the hope that, though he had no access to his former associates, his history might prove useful to them, that he uttered the last expression I shall quote. With an ardour and an emphasis which I cannot describe, he said to me, at one of the last interviews I had with him, "I earnestly pray that I may be a warning to them that forget God!" May this solemn and affecting exclamation of a young man, on the bed of sickness and of death, be fastened on the recollection especially of every young reader, that, instead of forgetting God, he may remember his Creator in the days of his youth, and be found, in the season of youth and of health, supremely valuing that Gospel which alone can give solid happiness in life, comfort in affliction, and peace in death!

CONCLUSION.

It has often been observed, that many of those who have been called to expiate their crimes against society by suffering the last penalty of the law, have dated their first departure from the right path to their early neglect of the Sabbath. Such cases I have met with, in visiting in their cells those condemned to death. But let it not be supposed that such feelings of anguish and remorse are confined to these. On different occasions I have witnessed a degree of mental agony, felt on the bed of sickness, on the simple ground of neglected or abused privileges, which it is impossible to describe, and which it is equally impossible for any one to behold without trembling at the thought of ever personally experiencing it. How are we to guard against this? In the prospect of death, when tried by that law which reaches our every thought, all must be conscious that they are chargeable with innumerable transgressions. "We have truly done those things we ought not to have done, and left undone those things we ought to

have done." I have known more cases than one in which, by a single sinful gratification, a man lost his character, destroyed his peace, subjected himself to the infliction of a wounded conscience, and ruined all his prospects for life. Oh! how would such have wished that they could have rolled back the wheels of time, and placed themselves in the position they occupied before they indulged in *that* sin which was so fatal to their happiness and hopes! But the deed was done, and could not be undone. In our sins of omission, too, the opportunity of usefulness is lost, and cannot be recalled.

Here, then, whatever our guilt may have been, whether on a larger or lesser scale, if we would enjoy any solid comfort, all must fall back on that precious and soul-sustaining truth, that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin."

But, while nothing but the atonement made by Jesus Christ can bring well-grounded peace to the troubled conscience, what does true wisdom here dictate?—Let every one in the day of health study so to act, as that he shall have as limited a field of painful reflection as possible, when called on the bed of death to look back along the whole line of his moral history, and to contemplate it in connexion with the judgment to come, and as viewed in the light of an opening eternity.

IX.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SABBATH ON DOMESTIC PIETY.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GLOVER, A.M.,
MINISTER OF GREENSIDE, EDINBURGH.

At a period which is unhappily distinguished by avowed and systematic opposition to the strict and scriptural observance of the Lord's-day, it is peculiarly incumbent upon all who name the name of Christ to have their minds thoroughly informed, and their principles established and fortified, by a careful and candid consideration of the subject, in all its aspects and bearings. And more especially there is one view of it, the habitual contemplation of which will be a powerful preservative both against unhallowed sophistry and evil example. I allude to the character of this Divine institution as being in its object, obligation, and advantages, fitted and intended for *human beings as such.* "*The Sabbath was made for man;*" not for a sect or a nation, or those living under any one dispensation, or in any age of the world's history, but *for man!* Language, assuredly, which cannot possibly be mistaken; indicating, on the authority of the true and faithful Witness, not only its institution by Him who made and appointed all things, but its being a gracious provision adapted alike for the benefit and advantage of all; and, therefore, anything but a yoke of bondage, or a local and temporary appointment, or a mere *Jewish peculiarity.* And, indeed, we are shut up to this conclusion by every view that we can take either of the nature of the ordinance, or of the account given us in Scripture of its institution and history.

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for it is equally appropriate and equally indispensable to every human being—to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; all being equally bound to commemorate what applies to all, and equally under the necessity of retiring from the cares and perplexities of a vain and an evil world, and of giving their attention without distraction to the one thing needful.

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for it is actually part and parcel of the moral law of the ten commandments, which the Almighty inscribed with His own hand on the tables of stone; after doing which it is emphatically said that *He added no more*, placing none of the ceremonials, not even the Passover, alongside of that unchangeable and indestructible institute, whose authority was indelibly stamped on that memorable day, when the Almighty, with His own voice, and not by the mediation of Moses, as in all the other requirements, uttered the *ten* awful *words*, amid the thunders of Sinai.

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for it was instituted when no distinction existed between Jews and Gentiles; before Abraham, the great progenitor of the peculiar people, was born; nay, before Adam fell from his primeval innocence.

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for even during the existence of the Mosaic economy we find the Almighty drawing a most intelligible distinction between the performance of its ceremonies and the moral and practical observance of His own Sabbatic rest. I refer to the charge so frequently and solemnly preferred against a hypocritical people, that while they attached an undue and superstitious importance to the observance of the ceremonial institute, they neglected the weightier matters of the moral law, and *brought wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath-day!*

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for, as it was instituted centuries before Judaism was

heard of, so it was destined to be the distinction of God's people when Judaism had ceased to exist. The time of the Messiah is described by the Spirit of prophecy as a bright and blessed era, when the wall of partition was to be thrown down, and strangers of the Gentile nations were to flock into the Church; and this happy consummation, which has already been realised in the experience of myriads, is described in the sure word of prophecy by *the sons of the stranger taking hold of God's covenant; keeping his Sabbath from polluting it.*

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for the strongest of all reasons for observing it did not exist till the Jewish economy had been brought to a final termination. I allude to the glorious resurrection of our Redeemer-Lord; when, after finishing the work of a new and better creation, He entered upon His Sabbath rest, as the Creator did of old. This is stated by the apostle to the Hebrews as pre-eminently the reason *why* there *remaineth* the keeping of a Sabbath to the people of God; and hence the beautiful connexion of those successive verses in the prophetic psalm, which set forth the signal triumph of our Lord after his apparent defeat, the blessed influence resulting from this victory, and the consequent exultation of the faithful on God's day of thanksgiving and rejoicing: "*The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes; this is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.*"

It is not, and it cannot be, a Jewish peculiarity; for the fact is undeniable—and a most important one it is, as bearing on its perpetual obligation—that the blessing of the Lord of the Sabbath on His own ordinance has descended in far more copious effusion in the New Testament times than it ever did under the ancient economy. Who, indeed, can form any estimate of the multitudes who, since the Saviour's resurrection, have been fitted by the in-

strumentality of a Sabbath upon earth, for the holier and happier employments of an endless Sabbath on high? And if this process of training souls for heavenly bliss is still going on wherever true Christianity is promoted, and is, in fact, the very object for which the Church enjoys any ordinances whatever—if being in the Spirit on the Lord's-day is still the pledge and means of attaining to that fulness of joy which is at God's right hand; where is the Christian man that would not tremble at the idea of cherishing, for a single moment, any thoughts of hostility or even indifference to that blessed ordinance, which is so pre-eminently the pathway of transition from a life of faith in a weary wilderness, to the enjoyment of that repose which is undisturbed and everlasting?

Yes; the Sabbath was made for man. Let us be thankful for the privilege. While all equally require it, with exquisite wisdom it is suited to the condition and circumstances of our common nature; and, with an adaptation peculiar to itself, it enables the child of immortality, even while sojourning in the world, to live above the world—above its cares, its tumults, its temptations, and its unhallowed influences. All these, through the sweet and solemn recurrence of the Sabbatic rest, are, in one degree or another, counteracted by the powers of the world to come; and there is not, in truth, a relation in which we can be placed, nor a comfort we can enjoy, nor a trial even to which we can be subjected, which may not be converted, through the regulating and hallowing influence of this blessed ordinance, into a bond of alliance with that better world, where no temptation shall ever entice us from our highest happiness, and no care shall ever disturb us in the worship of Jehovah.

Of the adaptation of the Sabbath to our nature and circumstances, some important views have already been presented in this series of essays. The subject, in its various aspects and bearings, is one of

vast amplitude as well as primary consequence; and I am sure that to those who have any just conception of the real position of human beings—their duties, their difficulties, and responsibilities—the particular part of the subject which we have now to consider—*the influence of the Sabbath on domestic piety*—will not appear the least interesting and important.

When we consider man in a moral and religious point of view, the *domestic constitution* under which God has placed him is one of the first things that is fitted to attract our notice; and the more attentively we consider this peculiar constitution, the more likely are we to be impressed with the Divine wisdom and goodness in thus *setting the solitary in families.* In very deed this constitution is no less than invaluable —most exquisitely adapted to our circumstances; as fruitful in blessed results as it is natural and easy in its operation; essential, in one degree or another, to the continued preservation of human society, and what bears more immediately on the subject we are endeavouring to illustrate—absolutely indispensable to the right exercise of every virtue to which human nature can be trained, and the full enjoyment of every comfort in which human beings can participate. Of the entire race of mankind, how small indeed is the proportion, at any given period, of those who are not actually reaping happiness or misery from the good or ill behaviour either of their parents on the one hand, or of their offspring on the other! And even in the case of the few who sustain neither of the endearing relations of parent or of child, how unquestionable is it, that the effects of home influences and associations, once in existence, still continue, in spite of the operation of other causes, to tell more or less powerfully on their pursuits, their character, and their happiness!

Nor can we fail to admire not only the efficiency of the domestic constitution, but the wisdom and benevolence displayed in it, when we consider what are the provisions of this gracious economy; and that

even in our fallen state—where the mechanism of the moral system is still more shattered and impaired than the framework of material nature—the results which it produces are as numerous as they are exquisitely beautiful, and as beneficial as they are various; leaving us, or rather impelling us, to draw the inference: If such are its effects even in our present state, how lovely and blessed would its operation have been throughout the successive generations of an unfallen world, living in purity and bliss amidst the unfading verdure of the garden of the Lord! For even in this world of guilt and woe, what are some of its manifold and merciful provisions? Provision is thereby made, in the mutual affection of those who are nearest and dearest to one another upon earth, for alleviating by holy sympathy the burden of every sorrow which they are destined to endure, and for doubling by the same sympathy the amount of every comfort which they are permitted to enjoy. Provision is thereby made in the strong and untiring operation of parental love for the secure preservation of the young amidst the perils of unconscious infancy; and afterwards, when they become alive to the endearments of that love which watched over their helplessness, for the supply of their ever-returning wants, by a channel of conveyance truly grateful to those who receive, and still more so to those who are the means of imparting. Provision is thus also made when parents are, by God's grace, in any measure what they ought to be, for the moral and religious training of the young, in a way which human wisdom has never ventured to displace, by any substitutes or inventions of her own, without miserable failure; the moral forces, which are found to be most effective even when acting individually, being here brought at once into powerful and harmonious co-operation—the commanding influence of that authority which of all created powers is the most venerable—and the voice of that instruction which, of all human lessons, is the most persuasive

—and all these, strengthened and confirmed in their operation, wherever the heart feels as it ought to do, by affection as strong as it is simple, gratitude as enduring as it is lively, sympathies as tender as they are sacred, and by nameless, numberless, holy, and happy associations, which all the vicissitudes of after life are unable to destroy. Now, where all these influences are brought to bear on the nurture and admonition of the young, may we not, by God's blessing, expect the most precious and happy results? More especially when we further consider that, by the existence of fraternal ties and the cultivation of fraternal affections, and the common experience of the same joys and sorrows under the same loved and venerated parental sway, the young are prepared, with a success which we could anticipate from no other training, for the duties to be discharged, and the sympathies to be exercised, on the wider theatre of after life. Yes, the hallowed retirement of the parental dwelling is the true school of virtuous training, both for the sufferings and activities of our present existence; and when it is added that not for temporal purposes only, but also, and chiefly, with a view to eternity, the only wise God has set the solitary in families; and that a peaceful and holy and happy home, sanctified by the special presence of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, is at once a preparation for heaven, and not unfrequently a humble foretaste of its bliss;—who will not readily admit that everything having a bearing on domestic piety and virtue is, in a moral and Christian point of view, of incalculable importance? Who, let me further ask, can fail to perceive, that that infidel *philosophy*, most assuredly *falsely so called*, which sneers at the provisions and obligations of the domestic economy, is as ruinous in its tendency as it is false in its principle—as insane as it is impious? And who does not recognise it as one of the loveliest and most obvious proofs of the Divinity of the Bible, that it not only adds its sacred sanction to all those provisions and obligations, but represents

them as the very mechanism by which Christianity, as a social system, is chiefly to be developed, and identifies the pious observance of them with the very essence of practical godliness? Who, therefore, can fail to be alive to the immense importance of bringing the fear of God to bear on this class of feelings and obligations, and, by thus impregnating a system so lovely and influential with the living principle of holiness, securing the most precious and extensive results for time and for eternity? And if it can be easily made to appear that the great, and I may add indispensable, means of inspiring a religious spirit into all the feelings and relationships of home, is no other than the due improvement of the holy rest of the Sabbath, with the advantages and opportunities which it brings along with it, who does not acknowledge a most affecting illustration of the Divine wisdom and goodness in saying to us, amidst the cares and the sorrows of the world, "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy?*" Oh, yes! the love and observance of that hallowed season is the life of all that is holiest, and happiest, and best in our domestic—that is, our real, existence. "*The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*"

The illustration of the domestic influence of the Sabbath, in a few obvious particulars, is all that the limits of this treatise will admit of; but the application of the argument to the various details and relationships of private life is what the attentive reader, if really solicitous to see its bearing on his own character and circumstances, can easily accomplish for himself.

To begin with those parties whose piety, if simple and devoted, is likely by the Divine blessing, to diffuse itself over the whole domestic circle, it is impossible to overlook the influence of the Sabbath on parents themselves, both as regards their own spiritual prosperity, and their fitness for discharging the momentous duties which they owe to their offspring. It

is too apt to be forgotten, that the bond which unites human beings together as husbands and wives, is not only the nearest and dearest, but the holiest of all earthly ties. It is selected by God himself to shadow forth that ineffable and indissoluble union which subsists between the Church and her Redeemer-Lord; it is a rare and precious relic, amidst all the imperfections that adhere to it, of the estate of primeval innocence and bliss; and, in alluding to the connexion between the duties of the married life and the use of means and ordinances, it is a striking fact, that almost the only other peculiarity of Paradise which has survived the ruins of the fall, is to be found in that gracious appointment which perpetuates *the keeping of a Sabbath to the people of God.*

And close, indeed, is the connexion that subsists between the right and holy observance of this primitive institution, and the right and holy fulfilment of conjugal obligations. To husbands and wives having the light of the Gospel to guide them, it is the plainest of all requirements, that they live as heirs together of the grace of life, helping and encouraging one another in the way that leads to heaven. But how willingly will all testify, who know the thing experimentally, that but for the stated return of the day of holy rest, with its quietness, its sacredness, and its seasonable aids and opportunities, the things that remain would soon sicken and die! Not that I mean to insinuate —far be the thought from every Christian husband and wife—that it is not both binding and attainable on other days to walk together as in the Lord's holy presence, and to supplicate together His gracious and effectual benediction. Nay, the mutual and holy obligation lies on them continually to care for one another's souls, to watch over one another in love, to take sweet and holy counsel together for the godly upbringing of their offspring, to bear one another's burdens in that strength which God alone can impart, and to seek from Him the sanctified use of every comfort and of every trial. And evident, most

evident it is, that this cannot be attained without the daily reading of God's Word, maintaining of spiritual converse, and bowing together at the footstool of the throne. But still, in the overwhelming majority of instances, the *daily* opportunities for these are comparatively brief, imperfect, and interrupted. To this the experience of thousands—sincerely desirous it were otherwise—will readily and abundantly testify; to say nothing of the undeniable fact, that but for the full flood of Sabbath opportunities, under the scorching influence of worldly cares and temptations, these precarious brooks by the way would speedily disappear and be forgotten. And it is only when the hallowed morn returns, that those who have been harassed and exhausted, and sometimes even tempted to relinquish their efforts, can count upon sure and satisfying opportunities of helping one another to make up their spiritual way, and to recover their spiritual strength and comfort. Then it is that the world's din being hushed into a blessed silence, they can listen with holy composure to the still small voice of Divine wisdom and consolation, and, without hinderance or interruption, repair often to the footstool, and linger together there. Then it is that, with glad and thankful hearts, they walk to the house of God in company; and having beheld the beauty of the Lord, and been satisfied with his goodness in the secret of His tabernacle, they return with renovated faith and patience to discharge their respective obligations, and to bear one another's burdens. And then it is, that after the public service is over, being furnished out of God's own house, and having bread to eat which the world knoweth not of, they are able, with singular advantage, to confer together about their doubts and their duties, their hopes and their fears, their sorrows and their privileges; the Christian husband sustaining with peculiar effect the comely and venerable character of a king and a priest in his own house; and the Christian wife, sitting beside him in meek and matron-like sub-

missiveness, and hearing, in the accent she loves, best, the words of eternal life. It should, of course, be carefully remembered, that this implies the exercise of foresight and previous arrangement, to prevent worldly cares, and sometimes worldly visitors, from intruding on their sacred seclusion, and also much prayerful fidelity in appropriating the Sabbath of the Lord to its own sacred employments; but when it is thus wisely provided for, and faithfully devoted, how often is it found, even from the influence it sheds on the days that follow, to have been a day of the Mediator's power, and a season much to be remembered!

But this naturally leads to another view of the subject closely connected with the foregoing. To Christian parents it belongs, not only to comfort and edify one another, but to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to watch for their souls, as they that must give account! Interesting and momentous charge! awful responsibility! the thought of which might well discourage the most assiduous, were they not abundantly furnished with God's own instituted means, and animated to the diligent improvement of them by His exceeding great and precious promises. But here, again, it cannot but be evident, and the most faithful and diligent parent will most readily verify the assertion, that were it not for Sabbath advantages and Sabbath opportunities, the result of all other efforts would be unsatisfactory indeed. Here, however, let me again guard myself, and that most carefully, against misconception. I do not mean to insinuate—and far be the thought from every Christian parent — that there should not be, as far as possible, amidst all the activities of life, the *daily* use of means and appliances. That would be a strange engrossment with the concerns of the present world, that would lead us to withhold from our tender offspring what is needful, from day to day, for their bodily sustenance; and surely it will scarcely be

denied by any genuine Christian, that the health of the souls of his offspring is at least as precious and important as his temporal life. And accordingly, in pious and well-ordered families, the *daily* employment, as far as may be, of the following simple but important means of grace, will not be neglected. In addition to reading by themselves a short portion of the Word of God, as a strictly devotional, and not merely rational or scholastic exercise (and to this children should be trained as soon as they can read at all; and that they may feel religion to be a strictly personal concern, no domestic duty, however sacred, should be allowed to supersede this exercise)—in addition to this, there ought to be the daily reading, in the presence of the assembled household, of a portion of that Holy Word, from which parents derive their authority and children their encouragement; which is the appropriate means of spiritual nourishment to a Christian family as such; and which, in order to the right discharge of every relative as well as holy duty, they all constantly stand in need of, for *a light unto their feet, and a lamp unto their path.* Beside, also, secret prayer—one of the first and most precious lessons that the young can be trained to, and which they will not easily forget altogether, if early and duly impressed on them with the sacredness of a father's authority, and the tenderness of a mother's love—there should be statedly offered on the domestic altar, however humble, the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and supplication with thanksgiving; old and young bowing together at the throne of the heavenly grace, and pleading with united hearts for all that they stand in need of, from Him who is their Father in heaven, the Maker, the Preserver, and the Saviour of them all. And, in addition to that blameless example which every parental movement should exhibit to the filial eye, there should be seen, at all times, a practical and intelligible reference to Him who is the guide of all His people's footsteps,

the strength of their hearts, and their everlasting portion.

But here, again, it must be equally obvious, as in the case formerly illustrated, that, without the advantages of a Sabbath, shutting out the cares of a present world, and affording time, and quiet, and seclusion for more sustained and concentrated efforts, and more abundant supplication—it must be evident, especially to parents themselves, and that exactly in proportion to the experience they have had in the discharge of their heavy responsibilities—that without the protection, the opportunities, and the precious privileges of the Lord's-day, all their other efforts would be extremely apt to be given up, and, while they continued to be put forth, would be of little avail.

Wherever the Sabbath is honoured, there are associations of sacredness, arising from the very return of that day which is called *the Lord's*, and is devoted to His service, which tell powerfully on the tender minds of the young, and which, among other endeared associations, recur frequently even to those who have bid adieu to their native country, when they travel back in imagination to the scenes of their early days in this chosen land of Sabbaths and of ordinances. This feeling is capable of being turned to the very best account by pious and judicious parents; not, indeed, by making the blessed day a season of gloom or of melancholy (an error to be sedulously avoided), but by strictly guarding it against the intrusion of worldly cares and occupations, and associating it in the youthful mind with all that is attractive and interesting in the discharge of pious obligation, in the knowledge of a once crucified but now risen Saviour, and in the experience of the powers of the world to come. When in the morning of life the Lord's-day is thus rightly understood, and truly honoured, it is often the happy means of producing impressions which are never afterwards effaced; and then what a wide and effectual door does it open for the full influence of all

that is most precious and venerable in the domestic economy—parental instruction, parental authority, parental wisdom, parental piety, and parental love! Sacred, indeed, is a parent's authority, and more than usually depraved is that youthful heart which is not alive to its sacredness; but assuredly it has double efficacy when, the evil influences of the world being for a season altogether suspended, the domestic king and priest, in the name of the Lord of the Sabbath, commands his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, and leads them to the mount of ordinances, *to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.* Venerable and lovely indeed is the example of a pious parent, and fitted at all times and in all circumstances to exert a most salutary influence, and that in many different ways; for it is one of the admirable provisions of the domestic constitution, that he whom God has placed over them, invested with a portion of his own authority, and whom they are to "*obey in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord*"—supposing him to be a Christian indeed, conformed to the image of the great Master of the household, and behaving himself wisely in a perfect way—is an object in every way fitted to tell powerfully and beneficially on the tender affections of the young; at once commanding their veneration, engaging their undoubting confidence, inspiring them with gratitude, awakening their strongest sympathies, and by all these concurring influences attracting them to the imitation of those virtues which are the daily objects of their admiration and love. Of all this, every one knows the influence is proverbial, and peculiarly fitted to impress the minds of the young, both while the loved example lives and moves before them, and still more when he whom they trusted and venerated comes to be laid in the silent grave. But now, of all that is interesting and sacred in a parent's worth and a parent's tender love, what, I would ask those who can speak from experience, affects the young so strongly at the

time, or recurs so readily to the memory afterwards, when dwelling on holy and happy passages of their history that will be repeated no more on earth, as Sabbath scenes, and Sabbath lessons, and Sabbath sanctities, and Sabbath endearments? And how easy an explanation does this admit of, when we think either of those public privileges or those private opportunities which the Sabbath brings along with it, and to both of which I have alluded already. It cannot fail, one would think, to have some powerful and permanent effect on the young, when they go with their parents to the house of God, at their desire, under their authority, after their example, and in their loved society; and there, in solemn fellowship with God's people, and in the way of God's appointments, unite in adoration of that gracious Being whom their parents worship, and wait on the preaching of that Gospel which, while it is the power of God unto salvation, ever tends, in proportion as it is received into the heart, to draw closer those pure and happy ties which God himself has appointed. And when the solemn assembly is over, a blessed influence goes home upon the family, which tells, both at the time and afterwards, on their character and conduct; prompting to the discharge both of pious and relative duty; strengthening and sanctifying the filial as well as the parental affections; and producing a result which even the world can appreciate, and which should always distinguish the dwelling-places of the righteous—the comely and consistent exhibition of "*the things which are true, and just, and honourable, and pure, and of good report.*"

This, of course, by all means supposes that private duties are not neglected; but that the public services are preceded and followed by such domestic exercises as are appropriate to the great object of the day, and indeed, are essential to the right performance of the duties of the sanctuary, and necessary to warrant the expectation that any permanent good results will flow from them. I allude more particularly to family

devotion and instruction, directed, as both of them ought to be, to the important object of not only commanding the attention, but engaging the affections of the young, and bringing them, by God's blessing, to feel that wisdom's ways *are ways of pleasantness*, and that their hearts should be *joyful in the house of prayer*. With a view to this, as access to their hearts must always be through the medium of the understanding, the practice of family catechising on the Sabbath evenings, so faithfully and successfully followed by our godly ancestors, should again be generally adopted and universally pursued. That precious form of sound words, the Shorter Catechism, which, after being sadly neglected, perhaps for two generations, has again begun to resume its proper place both in public and private instruction, with other valuable helps, of which there are not a few in the present day, should be diligently and systematically employed for the purpose of furnishing the opening understanding of the young with the first principles of the oracles of God. And, especially, the sacredness of the Sabbath, with the quietness of a Christian home on that day, should be improved, in the exercise of parental wisdom and gentleness and love, for plainly and familiarly reminding them of what has been said in public; elucidating such things as may require to be brought nearer to the level of their capacities, and urging on them those which may be most suitable to their age and circumstances. Above all, the opportunity should be improved for convincing them, gently and lovingly, but thoroughly and strongly, of the folly, the guilt, and the danger of all sin and all sinful companionship; the authority, omniscience, holiness, and goodness of God; the all-transcending love of Jesus, in dying for poor sinful creatures, such as we are; the new and living way of reconciliation through him; the necessity and efficiency of the Spirit's influence; the blessedness as well as importance of early piety and prayer; the practical character of true Christianity, as exempli-

fied in the faithful discharge both of relative and religious duty; and the immeasurable, the infinite inferiority of worldly riches, and pleasures, and distinctions, to that honour which cometh from the Lord, and that inheritance which is incorruptible and unfading, and those joys which are at God's right hand, and which are full and everlasting. Who can estimate the advantages resulting to families from such Sabbath lessons as these?—advantages which, in numberless instances, could not be realised in the most imperfect degree on ordinary days; whereas on this there is a blessed cessation from worldly toil and anxiety. Six days they have laboured and done all their work, but this is the Sabbath of the Lord their God, and the door is shut against every unhallowed intruder; and while the question goes round from one loved one to another, accompanied by the simple comment of parental piety, there radiates, even through the humble dwellings of poverty, the light of Divine truth and holiness and joy; and thus in numberless instances unnoticed by the world, in one day at least of the seven, "*the voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.*"

But here, again, we suppose, as already hinted, not only the exercise of family catechising, but the keeping up of family worship; for which also the return of the sacred day affords peculiar facilities. Not, I repeat again, that an exercise so essential to the spiritual prosperity of a family should be confined to this day (this, in the case of a faithful man, who knows his Bible, may be pronounced to be impossible); but of the happy families where it is established, how few, if any, are the instances where its origin may not be traced back to opportunities furnished by the Sabbath! Now, where is the Christian who requires to be informed that family worship, when maintained not in form merely, but in power, is the very stay and support of domestic harmony, domestic holiness, and domestic comfort?

By this solemn act, the family, as such, express their dependence upon God, their adoration of His glorious perfections, and their obligations to His love. It is, likewise, the instituted means of their obtaining the supply of their wants, the assurances of God's favour, and the communications of His grace. Wherever, therefore, this is wanting, the instructions given by the parent to his children cannot seem to be thoroughly sincere, or at least they will be apt to perplex them as glaringly inconsistent; while, on the other hand, nothing is more likely, by a Divine influence, to subdue their waywardness, and melt their hearts, and sanctify their affections, than bowing with the author of their existence at the footstool of eternal love, and hearing him, whom of all others upon earth they confide in most simply, and reverence most sincerely, casting them on the merits and the all-sufficiency of a Saviour-God, and pleading with a simple earnestness, which no human eloquence can equal in its power over *their* feelings, for the supply of their wants and the salvation of their souls. These are Sabbath scenes, whose hallowing and improving influences are not easily forgotten or speedily effaced; and not unfrequently has the Christian felt and acknowledged, amidst the vicissitudes of after life, not only that these simple ministrations were the means of his conversion to God, but that never did he feel nearer to the gate of heaven than when kneeling before the footstool at his father's bidding, and at his father's side, amidst the Sabbath evening sanctities of his father's house.

But the subject widens as we advance, and we must hasten to a close. The effects of this ordinance upon families are so various as to be obvious even to the eye of outward observation; and those especially whose duties call them to the promiscuous visitation of the poor in crowded cities, are often struck with the remarkable distinction which at once presents itself between the families who observe the Lord's-day, and those who observe it not. There is a

decency of external appearance, which is often no ambiguous token of something good existing within; there is a system and comely order in the very arrangements of the household; there is, even in humble life, a civility of manners and gentleness of demeanour, contrasting strikingly with the heathenish roughness of the avowed violators of the Sabbath; there is a liking also for home enjoyments and home society, which has a natural and close connexion with the decent domestic observance of the sacred day; and, in addition to that fervent filial piety which the members of a Sabbath-keeping family are so likely to exemplify, there is generated, by the same discipline and the same holy observances, that strong and sacred affection between brothers and sisters which constitutes so much of the happiness of a family while the parents are alive, and which tends so powerfully to keep them together after their parents have been laid in the grave. As we said already, this is another gracious provision of the domestic constitution under which God has placed us, that the same training which produces veneration for their parents, and submission to their authority, gives birth also to that strong mutual affection among those born under the same roof, revering the same authority, enjoying the same advantages, and toiling together under the same burdens, which no attachment, however fervent, to any casual friend can come up to. In this way, by a beautiful but effectual provision, they are prepared for the various duties of after life—not only those which imply respectful submission to their superiors, but such as include equity, forbearance, and friendship to those who are on a level with them. And therefore, where domestics also are cared for as they ought to be in Christian families, there is thus, under the paternal roof, a wise and gracious discipline of the most comprehensive character; the young being thereby trained for exercising all the virtues and sympathies of Christian society; *for maintaining the honour, and*

performing the duties belonging to every one in their various stations and relations, as superiors, inferiors, and equals. To refer again to those sacred fraternal attachments which are essential, in the first place, to the real wellbeing of a Christian family, and afterwards to the healthful condition of Christian society—they too, like the filial affections, are at once hallowed and most abundantly strengthened by the solemnities, the sympathies, and the privileges of a domestic Sabbath; and in multitudes of instances, especially in the present state of society, so various are their cares and occupations, that brothers and sisters would scarcely meet together at all, at least so as to allow of Christian converse, were it not for the opportunities secured to them by the day of sacred rest. Then, however, if they are really seeking Jesus, they hold interviews with Him and one onother, as happy as they are holy; and, while cherishing those kind Christian affections which are the true preparation both for time and for eternity, they can say, with as glad and thankful hearts as the mightiest and the wealthiest in the land, "*This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.*"

It should have been earnestly insisted on, had space allowed, that the benefits accruing to domestics, from the due improvement of the Sabbath in families where they are rightly treated, would form, if fully illustrated, a powerful additional argument in proof of the practical value and importance of that sacred institution. How often do we hear complaints of the thoughtlessness of servants, and their unfaithfulness to their earthly superiors! and yet how rarely is the lamentation taken up, that they are not faithful to themselves, and have no loyal attachment to a Master in heaven, being alienated from the Divine life through the ignorance that is in them, and *living without God and without hope in the world!* Should not Christians consider, that such being often in their early days cast abroad on the wide world with none to care for

their souls, it devolves, as a solemn obligation, on those under whose roof they come, to improve the opportunity presented to them by the Lord of the Sabbath, for instructing them respecting a blessed Saviour and a coming eternity, and for bringing them, if possible, by the Divine blessing, to be fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God? Such, assuredly, should not be excluded, either from pride, on the one hand, or spurious humility, on the other, from fully participating in the benefits of domestic instruction and devotion: they should be taken, if possible, with the family, after the good fashion of the olden times, to enjoy with them the precious blessing of a Gospel ministry; and when we consider the advantages which may, in these ways, accrue to them from the Christian observance of the Sabbath in a truly Christian family—advantages, be it observed, which in many cases are attainable by no other means—who, that has any true philanthropy, any friendship for the friendless, any compassion for precious souls, would not count "*the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable?*"

From the views now propounded, however imperfectly illustrated, we may learn how important, in a practical point of view, is the sanctification of the Sabbath. We have seen that family religion can scarcely be conceived to have any permanent existence without it; and this, therefore, identifies its observance with the present and eternal wellbeing of innumerable multitudes. And if it be also undeniable, that the true prosperity both of nations and churches is inseparably connected with the right condition of families, or rather, that the announcement of this prosperity is merely an aggregate statement of their virtue, and piety, and true happiness, how essential to the best interests of society must be the protection of that institution! and what enemies must be they to the human race who would wish to lower its sanctity, or weaken its obligation!

Again, how preposterous is the argumentation of those who would pretend to reason against the distinct observance of the Lord's-day, by alleging, that if men would be truly religious, every day should be a Sabbath! The employment of such language betrays the absence, if not of common candour, then assuredly of common sense and observation. That the true Christian, in the busiest avocations of daily life, will seek to set the Lord before him, and to hold communion with him continually, is most freely admitted, and cannot indeed be too strongly affirmed; and the enemies, as well as the friends, of Sabbatic observances, might be improved by deeply realising this great practical truth. But, most obviously, this is not the point at issue; the real question is—in the present circumstances of mankind, amidst the hurry and the cares of this restless world, would there be time without the Sabbath for quiet meditation? Would there be opportunities for awakening, or conversion, or edification, or spiritual converse? Would there be facilities, or even possibilities, of recovering from our conflicts with the world, and preparing to renew the combat with the enemy of our souls? The experience of Christians in every age has proved, that without such quiet breathing-times as the Sabbath affords, they could not either cherish the inspirations of piety in their own souls, or be the means of conveying them to their offspring; and, accordingly, he who knoweth our frame has wisely and graciously provided for the difficulty of our position, and the infirmity of our nature, by distinctly enjoining, "*Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.*"

But, again, if these views be correct, how indispensable is it for heads of families to exercise wisdom and foresight, if they would secure to themselves and their households the advantage of the Sabbath rest! There was once a good law in England, that no business should be transacted after nine o'clock on

Saturday evening. It is then the preparation, and the Sabbath draweth nigh. In our own families, at least, we should make prudent arrangements, and steadfastly adhere to them; and by carefully disposing of our worldly concerns beforehand, by preventing the wasting of the Sabbath morning in sloth or idleness, and the paying or receiving of idle visits on that day, and by systematically keeping the household by itself, we should labour to secure the full benefit of the ordinance. It becomes parents solemnly to consider, that Sabbath opportunities are a precious trust committed to them, not only for their own profit, but for the advantage of others; and that, to remind them at once of their duty and their responsibility, God has addressed the fourth commandment to them, not only in their individual capacity, but as heads of families: "*In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant.*"

In conclusion, how deeply it concerns us all, more especially as our Sabbaths upon earth may be fast hastening to a close, to take ourselves strictly to account in this important matter. Are we keeping the Sabbath from polluting it? Are we counting it "*the holy of the Lord, and honourable?*" And are we and our families carrying the power and the spirit of it through the daily avocations of life? What has been said of prayer may be said of the observance of this ordinance; we may and should judge of our performance of the duty, not only from the spirit that animates us at the time, but from the practical effects that result from the discharge of it. For, after all, the Sabbath, precious as it is, is but a *means* of grace; the great *end* is practical godliness; ceasing from the commission of sin; living to the praise of a risen Saviour; *glorifying* "*God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his.*" In what degree is this the attainment of ourselves and our families? What loud and solemn calls there are for strict self-examination! What a blessed thing it is,

when we think of our fearful shortcomings, to be able to repair to the blood of sprinkling; but at the same time, with what solemn emphasis should the recollection of every departed Sabbath say to us, Be up and doing? And when we feel most deeply interested in those who are nearest and dearest to us, besides looking back with humility and patience on the past, how thankful should we be that it is at once our privilege and our duty to look forward to the future, often cherishing the lively anticipation of that better Sabbath, whose brightness no cloud shall ever overcast, whose peace no care shall disturb, and whose holy and happy exercises shall never end!

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
SANDFORD FLEMING LIBRARY

X.

HISTORICAL NOTICES ON THE SUBJECT OF SABBATH OBSERVANCE, SHOWING ITS INFLUENCE ON THE PROSPERITY OF CHURCHES.

BY THE REV. W. M. HETHERINGTON LL.D.,

FREE CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

It may be fairly assumed that the blessings promised by God will flow most fully in the channel which he has himself appointed. The direct converse may be also assumed, that if men forsake the channels of God's appointment, they cannot expect the promised blessings in equal fulness. If, then, the Sabbath be the day which God has appointed for the communication of spiritual blessings, those blessings will be obtained in largest measure by its sacred observance, and will be forfeited by its neglect and desecration. This proposition we have begun by stating as assumed; but if it be true, it must be capable of being verified. The Christian Church has been now upwards of eighteen centuries in existence, and has experienced many vicissitudes, passing through periods of prosperity at one time and of adversity at another, of light and purity, or of darkness and impurity, of spiritual energy, or of spiritual torpor and corruption. Can it be shown by a series of historical notices, that there has been in a very remarkable degree a close correspondence in all these periods between the observance of Sabbath sanctity and the spiritual prosperity of the Churches, on the one hand, and the neglect of Sabbath sanctity and the spiritual declension of the Churches, on the other? To furnish

a brief answer to this question is the object attempted in this treatise, so far as its limits will permit.

Let it be observed that in this treatise we are warranted to hold, as already proved, that the Christian Sabbath is, under the Christian dispensation, the day which God has appointed for the communication of spiritual blessings in a special manner; on that the assumption which we are to prove rests; but that itself is not an assumption—it is a primary position already proved. And let it be further observed, that while it is not our province to prove the moral and religious identity of the Hebrew and Christian Sabbath, or, in other words, the Divine authority and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, we are equally warranted in holding that point also as already proved. We might, therefore, with perfect propriety, devote a portion of our space to the selection of passages from the Old Testament Scriptures, in which are exhibited the influence of Sabbath observance on the prosperity of the Hebrew Church and nation. But we forego that advantage, and content ourselves with directing the attention of our readers to that view of the subject, it being quite impossible for any intelligent or attentive reader of the Bible to avoid perceiving that, in exact correspondence with the religious observance or neglect of the Sabbath, was the Hebrew Church and nation blessed with prosperity and happiness, or smitten with those chastisements which manifested Divine displeasure.

There is still another remark of a preliminary character which must be made. It ought to be constantly borne in mind, that at the origin of the Christian Church, it was absolutely impossible that the Christian Sabbath could be kept with the same sacred strictness with which the Old Testament Sabbath had been kept. So long as the Christian Church was confined within the limits of Palestine, and restricted to native Jews and proselytes, as it was for some time, it was necessary for the converts to continue the exact observance of the Jewish Sabbath, in com-

pliance with the law of the land. They might, and there is reason to believe they did, observe the Lord's-day so far as that could be privately done, but they had it not in their power to render it a day of holy rest. When the Christian Church began to be diffused throughout the Gentile world, it had to encounter almost innumerable obstacles, and was exposed to almost constant persecution. In such a condition, it was of course impossible for the Church to secure anything even approaching Sabbath observance, so far as that implies the setting apart of the Lord's-day to public and private worship, and the prohibition of ordinary secular employment, or servile work on that day. But there is sufficient proof that the *first day of the week* was termed the *Lord's-day;* that it was devoted to the worship of God to the utmost degree which the depressed and persecuted state of the Church rendered possible; and that the ideal standard of religious observance which the early Christians longed to realise, was the transference of Old Testament principles from the *seventh* day to the *first;* in other words, the identification of the fourth commandment with the Lord's-day, which is the Christian Sabbath. These three points contain all that in that age was possible; and, therefore, all regarding which we can reasonably be expected to furnish evidence.

The Christians of the apostolic period assembled together for the worship of God, and for the advancement of piety, on the first day of the week, or on some part of that day, which was early distinguished by the significant designation of "The Lord's-day." In proof of this, it is only necessary to refer to Acts ii. 1, xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Rev. i. 10. That the stated and regular observance of this day, so far as practicable by the early Christians, had attracted the notice of the heathen, is evident from the well-known letter of Pliny to Trajan:—"They (the Christians) were accustomed on a stated day to meet before daylight, and to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as a god, and to bind themselves by an oath

to abstain from the commission of any wickedness; after which it was their custom to separate, and to meet again at a promiscuous harmless meal." The language of Justin Martyr, in his apology (A.D. 150), is very distinct:—"On the day which is called Sunday, all, whether dwelling in the towns or in the villages, hold meetings, and the memoirs of the apostles, and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as the time will permit; then the reader closing, the president in a speech exhorts and incites to an imitation of those excellent examples; then we all rise and pour forth united prayers; and when we close our prayer, as we before said, bread is brought forth, and wine, and water; and the president utters prayers and thanksgiving according to his ability, and the people respond by saying, Amen; and a distribution and participation of the things blessed takes place to each one present, and to those absent it is sent by the deacons. Those who are prosperous and willing give what they choose, each according to his own pleasure; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who carefully relieves the orphans and widows, and those who from sickness or other causes are needy, and also those in prison, and the strangers who are residing with us; and, in short, all who have need of help. We all commonly hold our assemblies on Sunday, because it is the first day on which God converted the darkness and matter, and framed the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour, on the same day rose from the dead." To the same effect is the statement of Tertullian, only that his account is somewhat more minute. One of the most direct and intelligible statements of the view taken by the early Christians of the Lord's-day is that of Eusebius, to the following effect:—"All things whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's-day, as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has a precedence, and is first in rank, and more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is delivered to us that we should

meet together on this day, and it is ordered that we should do those things announced in the Psalm."—Comment on Ps. xcii.

Our space will not permit us to multiply examples; but there is one which deserves particular notice. It appears from the "Acts of the Martyrs," as cited by Bishop Andrews, that one of the usual questions put to a person accused of being a Christian during the times of persecution was, *Dominicum servasti?* Hast thou kept the Lord's-day? The answer which an unshrinking believer generally returned was, "I am a Christian, and cannot omit its observance." And yet that observance could often be nothing more than attending the worship of God in some private dwelling-place, or some secret cave, or in the vaulted burying-grounds among the bodies of the dead. Yet so far as was possible they kept it holy, devoted it to the worship of God, and were ready to suffer the tortures of the most cruel martyrdom, rather than disregard or deny the Lord's-day.

While such was the spirit in which the Lord's-day was observed by the early Christian Church, the question arises, "What was the state of the Church with regard to its religious prosperity?" Let it be distinctly observed, that the religious prosperity of a Church is not to be estimated by the amount of favour which it obtains from the world. Very much the reverse indeed. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore doth the world hate you." The world's hatred, rather than the world's love, indicates the true prosperity of a Christian Church. But its true prosperity consists in its successful diffusion of the glad tidings of salvation throughout the world in spite of all opposition, and in winning souls to Christ. During that age, when the Lord's-day was so faithfully kept in caves, and tombs, and surrounded by every form of peril, the Church continued to advance with the most marvellous rapidity. It had its early abode in an upper room in Jerusalem. It was soon found in Samaria.

Antioch received its influence, and called its teachers Christians. Damascus heard its voice, and the deserts of Arabia were conscious of its presence. The temple of Diana at Ephesus was deserted, and Asia began to despise its long-worshipped goddess. Inquisitive and fickle Athens heard and wondered, as the groves of Academe and the tribunal of Areopagus resounded with the proclaimed Gospel of the no longer "unknown God." Stern and haughty Rome was constrained to pause and listen, while Paul, a Roman citizen, although in bonds, defended and asserted that heavenly truth which no bonds could fetter, till even "they of Cæsar's household" received it with faith and love. It pierced the darkness of Egypt, dispelled the gloomy mysteries of that land of ancient and fabulous renown, and diffused the mild and benignant light of the Sun of Righteousness throughout the swarthy regions of Africa. For a time it seemed as if it would indeed soon conquer the world. The blood of the martyrs seemed to be in reality the seed of the Church; and the fires in which Christ's faithful witnesses were consumed were but the signal-fires, conveying with the speed of light the message of salvation to another and another startled and awakening country.

But this period of religious prosperity came suddenly to a close. And it is most instructive to mark how exactly the first symptoms of its cessation coincide with the appearance of a new and delusive element. The Christian heroism of the early martyrs had gained the highest admiration of the suffering yet prospering Church. This was not strange, nor even censurable, within due limits. But the praises of the martyrs became extravagant. The places where they had suffered—their gathered ashes—the graves in which their mangled remains had been interred—these began to be regarded with superstitious veneration. Ere long the days of their martyrdom began to be viewed as comparatively sacred to their memories, not only for the purpose of keeping their faith and fortitude in recollection, but to be set apart for wor-

ship, as in some measure hallowed by their death. Not only were their virtues then commemorated in the most pompous and extravagant language, but it began to become customary to offer up prayers, at first *for* the souls of those martyrs, and ere long *to* those martyrs themselves, as to a kind of subordinate mediators. These saints'-days very soon interfered with the veneration which had previously been entertained for the Lord's-day alone; and before the power of pagan Rome to suppress the public observance of the Christian Sabbath had entirely passed away, its sole and separate sanctity had been invaded by a legion of those spurious holy days of man's devising. In vain did Constantine frame laws requiring the inhabitants of cities, and all mechanics, to suspend their ordinary business and their labours on the Lord's-day, closing also the courts of justice and all other public offices. This clearly proves in what manner the early Church had desired to observe the Christian Sabbath; but the laws of Constantine introduced a most pernicious element. The Lord's-day and the other festivals were placed by these laws on the same level; and as those other festivals were not of Divine authority, the inevitable effect was to degrade the sacred sanctity of the Lord's-day from its sole supremacy over the conscience of the worshippers. This effect was very soon apparent, and it very rapidly increased. It could not indeed be otherwise; for the attempt to raise any human invention in matters of religion into an equality with what is of Divine institution, tends directly, and in the first instance, to lower the authority of the Divine to the level of the human. But it also tends in the next instance to elevate the human above the Divine, in consequence of the indulgence which it gives to man's naturally rebellious will. What has been termed will-worship is inevitably false worship; and as inevitably, by almost a single step, abolishes, or at least degrades, true worship. The Church was ready to take that step before the time of Constantine. It was taken

then; the progress of defection and error went on with increasing rapidity and power, till within a short period the whole year was overrun with saints'-days and festivals, and the Lord's-day was almost entirely disregarded, or changed into a day of mere amusement, recreation, and festivity, or of kinds and degrees of desecration too sinful and shameful to be described.

The question need scarcely be put, whether the Church enjoyed religious prosperity during that period? It was a dark and adverse time, fitted only for the development of the anti-Christian kingdom, which indeed "practised and prospered." The setting up of saints'-days, and the degradation of the Lord's-day, may with great propriety be regarded as a characteristic of the rise of that dread and desolating power; and the growth and aggrandisement of the Romish apostacy cannot be viewed as anything else than the measure of adversity and depression endured for a permitted season by the true Church of Christ. But where was that Church then to be found? Chiefly among the Vaudois valleys of the Alps—among that people so generally known as the Waldensians. Scarcely had the Anti-Christian aspect of Rome begun to appear, when the dwellers in those secluded valleys of Piedmont began to be known as peculiarly distinguished by their strict adherence to the simplicity of worship, and purity of morals, which characterised the earliest ages of the Church, and by their refusal to adopt any other standard of faith than the Bible alone. To those acquainted with Church history we need but mention such names as Vigilantius and Claud of Turin, to remind them at once of the early purity and zeal of that remnant of true Christianity. But the scope of this essay requires us to furnish some proof that the Waldensian Church was distinguished by Sabbath observance. And happily this can be done, although the writings of that simple people were not numerous, and although many of those writings perished in the devastating persecutions by which Papal Rome strove to exterminate

them. In one of their ancient writings of a metrical construction, entitled "The Noble Lesson," of date about 1100, there is not only a distinct recognition of the Divine authority of the Moral Law, consequently of the fourth commandment, but a clear indication of a very important principle, well fitted to explain the relation which the whole of that law stands to the Gospel:—"Christ did not change it that it should be abandoned, but renewed it that it might be better kept." In the Confession of Faith of the same Church, the feasts and vigils of saints are denounced as "an unspeakable abomination." In an "Exposition of the Commandments," the following passage occurs:—"They that will keep and observe the Sabbath of Christians—that is to say, will sanctify the day of the Lord, must be careful of four things; the 1st is, to cease from all earthly and worldly labours; the 2nd, not to sin; the 3rd, not to be idle in regard to good works; the 4th, to do those things which are for the soul." And in another confession, drawn up at a later period, the following article occurs:—"That on Sundays we ought to cease from our earthly labours, through zeal for God, and love towards our servants, and that we may apply ourselves to hearing the Word of God." These notices are enough to prove that the Waldensian Church was specially distinguished by its sacred observance of the Lord's-day.

But was the religious prosperity of that Church equally remarkable? If to endure all hardships, all sufferings, all tribulations, with constancy unshaken, patience invincible, and faith victorious, be religious prosperity, the Waldensian Church was most prosperous. If to continue steadfast through a long agony of centuries, glorifying God in the midst of the furnace of persecution, even when it was heated seven times, maintaining still imperishable life, and heavenly hope triumphant over all, be religious prosperity, that Church in the wilderness was marvellously prosperous. And if, in the midst of all its fiery trials, to strive to its power, and beyond its power, to act as a missionary

Church, not only upholding its own testimony to the truth, but striving to diffuse around it that priceless blessing, thus both continuing and extending true Christianity in spite of all the deadly efforts of anti-Christ, be religious prosperity, the faithful and zealous Waldensian Church was gloriously prosperous. The teaching of that Church pervaded the south of France, and became instrumental there in winning many souls to Christ. Its living truths ran along the Rhine, communicating spiritual life to numbers, and preparing a way for future Gospel progress. Bohemia caught some rays of the sacred light, which, in a later age, became the day-spring of heavenly brightness to suffering martyrs. The distant British Isles obtained some powerful life-germs, destined in due time to put forth a mighty and growing energy, not only for the protection of the suffering Waldenses themselves, but for the diffusion of Gospel truth throughout the world. Such was the religious prosperity of the Bible-loving and Lord's-day keeping Waldensian Church; and no true Christian will deny that it was a kind and measure of prosperity which God alone could have given, and the world could not take away—the full amount and value of which only the day of judgment will reveal.

Popery succeeded at length in wellnigh wearing out the saints, and exterminating all who had borne testimony against her pernicious errors. The Waldensian Church was almost wholly destroyed or silenced. The attempted reformation in Bohemia had been suppressed. Long had the Bible been a sealed book, not only to all but priests, but to a great majority of them also, in consequence of their gross ignorance. And the multiplicity of saints'-days, and festival holidays of all kinds, had completely overwhelmed and concealed the Lord's-day, so far as regarded the idea of its peculiar sanctity. Far more of what seemed like religious veneration was given to the days of eminent saints than to the Christian Sabbath In truth, there had ceased to be

be obvious that this principle might be used wrong, if it were applied to explain anything which was not essentially typical. It might, for example, be assumed that the Sabbath of the Old Testament was typical of a spiritual rest in Christ; and on this assumption it might be loosely argued that since the coming of Christ had put an end to all that was typical of Him, it had put an end to the Old Testament Sabbath. So far as this assumption was admitted, it would at once set aside the argument from tradition and authority, and would thereby seem to secure the victory. That it enabled the Reformers to abolish all saints'-days and festivals is clear; but it did so at the expense of seeming to cast doubts on the sanctity of the Lord's-day. This was a consequence which they by no means wished to follow, and therefore they very pointedly and strongly declared their conviction of the necessity and moral obligation of the sacred rest of one whole day in seven for religious worship and spiritual improvement. "It is not proper," said Calvin, in his Commentary on Exodus, under the Fourth Commandment, "to allow any period to elapse without our attentively considering the wisdom, power, justice, and goodness of God, as displayed in the admirable workmanship and government of the world. But because our minds are unstable, and are thence liable to wander and to be distracted, God, in His own mercy, consulting our infirmity, sets apart one day from the rest, and *commands it to be kept free from all earthly cares and employments*, lest anything should interrupt that holy exercise. For this reason He did not simply wish each to rest at home, but also to meet in the sanctuary, that they might there attend to prayers and sacrifices of thanksgiving, and might make progress in spiritual instruction from the interpretation of the law. In this respect the necessity of a Sabbath is common to us with the people of old, that we may be free on one day of the week, and so may be better prepared both for learning and for giving testimony to our faith." Luther says, "Al-

sophistry. We cannot wonder if some portions of this great work were not accomplished so well as others. We cannot be surprised if some of the principles which they enunciated were not absolutely perfect, erring either by including more than was intended, or by leaving out something which was essential to a just conclusion. They did, in reality, err in both of these forms in several instances. With regard to the Bible, for example, some of the Reformers would have included the Apocryphal writings among those of Divine authority; while others would have rejected several of those portions of Scripture which are now almost universally regarded as inspired. In like manner, with regard to the Lord's-day, they failed somewhat in giving a sufficiently clear and decisive judgment. Our limited space will not permit us to attempt anything like a full explanation of the views entertained by the leading Reformers respecting the Sabbath; but a brief outline may be given.

When the first Reformers began their great and perilous enterprise, they had, as already stated, almost every kind of difficulty to encounter. They were themselves but newly emancipated from Popish thraldom, and scarcely emerged out of Popish darkness. In their conflict with Rome they had to rescue themselves from the weight of tradition and authority, by which the exercise of free thought had been crushed. They were thus led to entertain great jealousy of everything which seemed to rest on tradition and authority; and they strove to find principles of scriptural interpretation by which all regard for tradition might be at once set aside. One principle which was extensively adopted, and proved to be of great value, was the principle that nearly the whole of the Old Testament economy was typical, and had its fulfilment in the New Testament dispensation. By this principle, which is both true and extremely important, when employed with due intelligence and caution, the whole theory of a priesthood and of sacrifices in the Christian Church was at once exploded. But it must

be obvious that this principle might be used wrong, if it were applied to explain anything which was not essentially typical. It might, for example, be assumed that the Sabbath of the Old Testament was typical of a spiritual rest in Christ; and on this assumption it might be loosely argued that since the coming of Christ had put an end to all that was typical of Him, it had put an end to the Old Testament Sabbath. So far as this assumption was admitted, it would at once set aside the argument from tradition and authority, and would thereby seem to secure the victory. That it enabled the Reformers to abolish all saints'-days and festivals is clear; but it did so at the expense of seeming to cast doubts on the sanctity of the Lord's-day. This was a consequence which they by no means wished to follow, and therefore they very pointedly and strongly declared their conviction of the necessity and moral obligation of the sacred rest of one whole day in seven for religious worship and spiritual improvement. "It is not proper," said Calvin, in his Commentary on Exodus, under the Fourth Commandment, "to allow any period to elapse without our attentively considering the wisdom, power, justice, and goodness of God, as displayed in the admirable workmanship and government of the world. But because our minds are unstable, and are thence liable to wander and to be distracted, God, in His own mercy, consulting our infirmity, sets apart one day from the rest, and *commands it to be kept free from all earthly cares and employments*, lest anything should interrupt that holy exercise. For this reason He did not simply wish each to rest at home, but also to meet in the sanctuary, that they might there attend to prayers and sacrifices of thanksgiving, and might make progress in spiritual instruction from the interpretation of the law. In this respect the necessity of a Sabbath is common to us with the people of old, that we may be free on one day of the week, and so may be better prepared both for learning and for giving testimony to our faith." Luther says, "Al-

though the Sabbath is now abolished, and the conscience is freed from it, it is still good, and even necessary, that men should keep a particular day in the week for the sake of the Word of God, on which they are to meditate, hear, and learn ; for all cannot command every day : and nature also requires that one day in the week should be kept quiet, without labour either for man or beast." This view he enforces by mentioning the example set by the Apostolic Church, in choosing the first day of the week as what ought to determine the Church in succeeding times. The language of the other chief Reformers, such as Melancthon, Bucer, and Beza, is still more explicit with regard to the moral obligation of keeping holy one whole day in seven—their general views being, that so far as the Jewish Sabbath was ceremonial and typical it had been abolished, so that the keeping holy of the *seventh* day of the week, or Saturday, had ceased to be binding; but that so far as it was moral, it had been transferred to the *first* day of the week—the Lord's-day—which Christians were to keep holy, by resting from servile work the whole day, and employing it only in religious observances and spiritual improvement. Want of space alone prevents us from proving, by ample quotations from their writings, that such were the deliberate opinions of the leading Reformers concerning the sacred rest and religious observance of the Christian Sabbath.

But although the Reformers maintained the necessity and moral obligation of the Christian Sabbath, both in their writings, and especially by their personal example, they had used language and uttered sentiments but too susceptible of being perverted and misapplied. This very soon took place, and has been continued till the present time, as must be well known to every person conversant with the recent controversies respecting Sabbath observance. It is a very easy, and a very common artifice to quote a piece of a sentence and leave out the rest. It is very easy to

quote Luther as declaring, that "the Sabbath is now abolished, and the conscience is freed from it:" and stop there, concealing the remainder of his sentence regarding the necessity of still keeping one day in the seven for sacred rest and religious worship. Equally easy and convenient is it to refer to the theory held by so many of the Reformers, that the Old Testament Sabbath was ceremonial and typical, and had consequently passed away like the other types of Christ and of the Gospel dispensation. The struggle against Papal tradition and authority, which had given occasion to the rash construction and use of that assumption, passed away, but the assumption was retained and directed against the sanctity of the Lord's-day itself. This lax theory was diffused throughout the Lutheran Churches much more rapidly and extensively than among those generally designated the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches. The fatal effect was too soon apparent. The strong faith and active energy of the Lutheran Churches sunk into lethargic torpor, as if their spiritual life had sustained a sudden and universal paralysis. There can be scarcely anything more mournful than to trace the progress of declension in Churches once distinguished for spiritual truth, purity, and power, But it is always of great importance to mark the commencement of such a course, to detect the baneful element from which it sprung, and to use the lesson thus learned in guarding against the introduction of a similar element, or in striving to expel it where it has already forced entrance. We do not hesitate to say, that the defective views of some of the early Reformers respecting the true character of the Sabbath, and the misapplication to it of the principle of typology, formed the first element of that paralysis which so soon began to deaden the Continental Churches, and under which they have so long lain, and still lie, spell-bound, inactive, and unfruitful. In particular, we regard it as at least furnishing occasion to that vast system of false interpretation

termed Neology, which nearly destroyed the Christianity of the Continent.

The process can only be indicated, not traced out. For the sake of rendering the indication as distinct as possible, a slight degree of repetition may be forgiven. While Luther, Calvin, and the contemporaries of these great men were striving to emancipate the human mind from the degrading fetters of Rome, they gave expression to a principle of scriptural interpretation, true in itself, regarding the view which ought to be taken of what was typical and ceremonial in the Mosaic dispensation; but they were not infallible in their application of this true principle, and they erred in applying it to the Sabbath. To this misapplication they seem to have been led by their desire to rescue Christianity from the vast multitude of festivals and holidays which Romish superstition had invented, and wherewith the Lord's-day had been overlaid. They were desirous also to free the human soul from everything which seemed a yoke of bondage, that its worship might have the high and holy character of a worship absolutely pure and free—might be under no subjection to any law but what an apostle terms, "The royal law of liberty." But what to a spiritual mind is liberty, may to an unspiritual mind be licentiousness. Every day might be a Sabbath to a man who lived in constant communion with God; and to such a man there might be no need of any special command to keep holy one day in seven, except the fact that, God having required it of mankind in general, its special observance would be regarded by him with special delight. But to men who had not attained equal advancement in spiritual life, the moral necessity of one whole day in seven to be employed in religious exercises, would be unspeakably more urgent; while anything that served to give countenance to a relaxed observance of that day, on the high theory of free spiritual worship, would be certain to be understood and abused.

Such was the case first and most signally with the

Lutheran Churches. Beginning with a lax theory, they rapidly increased in their laxity of Sabbath observance; and when the conflicts between the Romish and the Protestant parties became that of actual war, the peculiar sanctity of the Lord's-day almost entirely disappeared. To such a degree was this the case, that many pious men among the ministers of the Lutheran Churches, seem to have been in doubt whether the fierce wars which so long desolated Germany were to be regarded as the cause of the extreme Sabbath profanation which prevailed, or as judgments inflicted on the community on account of that profanation. Comparative peace brought no return of Sabbath sanctity. But it allowed the false principles of Scripture interpretation, so unhappily introduced by spiritual men, to be fully developed and applied by men who had no spiritual element in their inner being to check or modify their progress. Thus Neology, like the upas-tree, arose and overspread all Germany, till nearly every living thing perished beneath its deadly shade. For several generations past, even in Protestant Germany, the chief mark by which the Lord's-day is distinguished from other days, is the festivity of every kind, public and private, to which it is devoted. Its moral and religious observance is almost wholly unknown, as every traveller records. But has this disregard for the law of God given security to human laws? Let the falling crowns, the tottering thrones, the fierce revolutionary convulsions of the Continent, give the answer.

In countries which may be termed Calvinistic, the progress of Sabbath desecration was less rapid than in those where the Lutheran system prevailed. Strong, and for a time successful, resistance was made, both in Switzerland and Holland. Yet in these countries too, the erroneous application to the Sabbath, of the principle of typical interpretation, which had been early adopted, continued to work injuriously, and, aided by other causes, produced the

most pernicious result. Nowhere has this been more deplorably manifest than at Geneva. But it is right to state, that the Sabbath desecration, now so common at Geneva, scarcely began to appear till after the lapse of more than a century from the Reformation. When it did appear, it came as the consequence of the false theology which had began to be held and taught by the professors and pastors. When Socinian errors were publicly taught, nothing truly sacred could be long preserved; when the divinity of the Lord himself was denied, nothing was left to preserve the peculiar sanctity of the Lord's-day. The consequence has been, that the Lord's-day is now utterly and almost universally profaned. To use the words of a recent traveller:—"Geneva has fallen lower from her original doctrine and practice than ever Rome fell. Rome has still superstition; Geneva has not even that semblance of religion. In the head church of the original seat of Calvinism, in a city of 30,000 souls, at the only service of the Sabbath-day, there being no morning service, I sat down in a congregation of about two hundred females and twenty-three males, mostly elderly men of a former generation, with scarcely a youth, or boy, or workingman among them. A meagre liturgy, or printed form of prayer; a sermon, which, as far as religion was concerned, might have figured the evening before at some geological society as an 'ingenious essay' on the Mosaic chronology; a couple of psalm tunes on the organ, and a waltz to go out with, were the church service. A pleasure tour in the steam-boats, which are regularly advertised for a Sunday promenade round the lake; a pic-nic dinner in the country, and overflowing congregations in the evening at the theatre, the equestrian circus, the concert saloons, ball-rooms, and coffee-houses, are all that distinguish Sunday from Monday."

The condition of France needs only to be mentioned. French Protestantism was dashed to the ground, and wellnigh exterminated by despotism and

treachery. True religion ceased to influence the community; and when the Revolution of last century overthrew all existing institutions, even the nominal Sabbath of Popery was abolished, and a *tenth* day appointed for a day of popular recreation. But that tenth day afforded to miserable and blood-stained France no respite from its woes, no comfort, and no blessing. It returned to its Popery and its Popish Sabbath, but not to peace, holiness, and happiness; and it still reels and staggers, overhung by dense spiritual darkness, and shaken by wild, ominous, and apparently interminable convulsions.

The history of the British Churches would form the best possible illustration of the connexion between Sabbath observance and religious prosperity. We may assume that most of those who will peruse this treatise are already tolerably well acquainted with the general history of Christianity in Britain; still it may be expedient to select a few notices of the most prominent points which bear upon our immediate subject. The first form of the Reformation in England was merely that of a change from an ecclesiastical to a civil Pope, which was nearly all the change that Henry VIII. contemplated or desired; and as Papacy had almost entirely nullified the Sabbath, such a change as that which Henry effected had no tendency to promote Sabbath observance. But the abolition of Papal supremacy was followed by the emancipation of the Bible, from which other and more important changes could not but follow. The Lord's-day was not indeed restored to its sole supremacy, many festivals and sacred days of human institution being retained and kept with at least equal reverential respect. Against the element of human authority in religious matters, however, a contest very soon began to be waged, which has not ceased to this day, and never will cease till the liberty of obeying Christ alone be gained. Every person knows that the Puritans were peculiarly distinguished by their strict observance of the sacred

rest of the Lord's-day. Nor was this characteristic of those alone who separated from the Established Church of England, but of those also who remained within its pale, and are generally designated the Doctrinal Puritans. It would not be possible to find anywhere clearer statements, or more earnest enforcements of the great principle and duty of the religious observance of the Lord's-day, than are to be found in the writings of the English Puritan divines. And it ought always to be borne in mind, that the Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith, which is still the standard of all Presbyterian Churches, and in which there is the strongest assertion of the Divine authority and inviolable sanctity of the Christian Sabbath ever produced, was framed by a body of about one hundred and twenty divines, of whom only four were Scottish, five were Independents, and all the rest had been trained up in the English Church, and had received Episcopal ordination. From this it is plain, that had the religious mind of England been in a condition to develop itself freely, it would have proclaimed the principle and maintained the duty of Sabbath sanctity with the utmost possible decision and firmness. So far, indeed, as circumstances permitted, this was very clearly and earnestly done. And the very times when Sabbath sanctity was proclaimed and maintained in England, were those in which pure and spiritual religion was in its highest state of freedom and prosperity; and the men by whom this was done were the men whose works are still among the most precious treasures of English religious literature.

As if to make this characteristic of the English Puritans the more remarkable, their opponents ever strove to distinguish themselves by Sabbath desecration. By the authority of two successive Kings—James I. and Charles I.—the infamous "Book of Sports" was published, and the bishops were directed to enforce the recommendation of it through all the

parish churches of their respective dioceses. Some refused to read it, and were suspended in consequence; others read it, and immediately after having done so, read also the Fourth Commandment—"Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy"—adding, "This is the law of God, the other is the injunction of man." Notwithstanding the employment of both power and guile, the people, in a great many instances, refused to turn God's appointed time of holy rest into periods of Popish or heathen saturnalia. But the evil could not be undone. The Restoration of Charles II. was the overthrow of English Puritanism—that is, of the ascendancy of true religion in England; and the period of servile sycophancy which followed proved enough not only to efface the idea of Sabbath sanctity from the general mind of England, but even to stamp it with reprobation as a relic of Puritanical fanaticism. And never, probably, did the prevalence of true religion experience a more sudden and deep decline in any country, than it did in England during the reign of Charles II.—a decline from which it has not yet recovered, and never will, till Sabbath sanctity is restored. The deep lethargic slumber of Christianity throughout the greater part of last century, was not only the inevitable consequence of the neglect into which Sabbath observance had fallen, but was also very significantly marked by increasing neglect of Sabbath observance. The disease was apparent both in its cause and in its symptoms. And in the efforts made towards the close of last century to arouse the slumbering Churches, the great principle of Sabbath sanctity began again to be revived. Thus, also, both the remedy and the returning health were at once displayed. It is not easy to conceive a more complete demonstration of the indissoluble connexion between Sabbath observance and religious prosperity than was thus providentially made manifest.

Scotland has always been peculiarly distinguished by its Sabbath sanctity, though that was neither attained nor preserved without many struggles and

fluctuations. As far as it is now possible to ascertain, Christianity was introduced into Scotland before the sole supremacy of the Lord's-day had been invaded by the introduction of saints'-days, and other festivals of human invention. The Culdees kept holy the Christian Sabbath, and paid no respect to the numerous innovations of Rome. This is evident even from the dim records preserved respecting their controversy with the monk Augustine and his followers, respecting the observance of Easter. During a period of not less than six centuries, the Culdees continued to strive against the encroaching power of Rome, in the endeavour to maintain their own pure and simple Christianity. Nor did the struggle cease till almost the very eve of the Reformation, when the primitive Culdees were succeeded by Wyckliffites and Hussites, or, as they were termed, the Lollards of Kyle. As the Culdees and Lollards became fewer and fewer in numbers, and weaker in general influence, while Popery increased in power, the sanctity of the Sabbath ceased to be generally observed, and its profanation became more and more flagrant. Still the feeling of respect for the Sabbath remained, and we find that an Act of Parliament was passed in the reign of King James IV., prohibiting the holding of markets or fairs on holy days, particularly on the Sabbath-days, or in church-yards. This was repeated and enlarged, after the Reformation had made great progress in Scotland, in the year 1579, and again in 1593, during the reign of James VI. A considerable number of acts were passed in succeeding reigns, against profaneness and for the due observation of the Lord's-day, till the year 1701, forming a complete and comprehensive series till within a few years of the Union. In the year 1823, the late Lord President Blair, referring to these acts, said, "By these statutes, every person guilty of profaning the Sabbath-day in any manner whatever, is made liable in a pecuniary penalty, *toties quoties*, to be recovered by prosecution before sheriffs, justices of peace, or any

other judge ordinary. And the minister of every parish, kirk-session, or the presbytery, or a person named by them, is entitled to prosecute. There appears, therefore, to be no defect in the law as it stands, if duly executed; and the power of enforcing execution is lodged with the church judicatories themselves. Perhaps it might be proper to cause print the above statutes, and transmit copies thereof to the different presbyteries, so that due notification may be given to all concerned."

We have referred to these Scottish Acts of Parliament, not for the purpose of raising the question, whether Parliament should pass such acts or not, but for the purpose of showing what has always been the mind of Scotland on the subject, and what is the law of Scotland at the present moment. In any free country the law of the land must always embody the mind of the community; and very especially must that be the case in regard to any legislative acts passed by a Scottish Parliament about religious matters, in which the entire body of the people have always felt so deeply interested. Further, every person adequately acquainted with the history of the Church of Scotland knows well that the Parliament never passed any Act relating to religious matters till the mind of the whole religious community had been fully made known through the medium of the Church courts—except, indeed, in those instances when the King and the Court-party passed persecuting Acts, for the avowed purpose of changing the religious institutions of the kingdom. The law of the land, in short, always followed, never preceded, the mind of the religious community, in its enactments in behalf of Sabbath sanctity. It was because the Scottish people sought security in their religious observance of the Lord's-day, that they requested the Legislature to repress the public outrages which a section of godless and lawless violators continued to perpetrate. No law can make men truly religious. No law can compel men to keep holy the Sabbath-day in the

spirit of real holiness. Nor did our Scottish forefathers entertain any such irrational notion. But law can compel men to abstain from public and glaring violation of the Lord's-day, and can thereby secure to those who wish to keep it holy, the opportunity of doing so in peace and safety. This was what the Scottish people desired; and this was what the law of Scotland sought to secure. True Sabbath sanctity God's law acting on conscience can alone produce.

The fact has been already stated, that the Scottish Acts of Parliament relating to Sabbath observance were merely the embodiment of the nation's previously-expressed desire. Due attention to this important fact will of itself show the connexion between Sabbath observance and the religious prosperity of the Church. For, whether it be admitted that a state has a conscience or not, it will not be denied that a Church cannot exist without a conscience, and that just in proportion to the tenderness of its conscience will it be sensitive of sin, and zealous for increase of godliness. When the Church of Scotland was overpowered for a season with prelatic persecution, or sunk into spiritual lethargy, it made no effort to secure or promote Sabbath sanctity. When it emerged from persecution, or awoke from lethargy, it instantly manifested its renewed love of the Lord's-day, and its earnest desire to have that day kept holy. Such was the actual origin of all the acts referred to, with one singular exception, the history of which, did our space permit us to give it, would indeed prove the rule. The religious condition of the people, at one of the periods signalised by the passing of an "Act for the Due Observance of the Sabbath-day," has been thus described by a contemporary historian:—"Every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible —yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles, either by the parents or their ministers. I have lived many years in a parish where I never

heard one oath, and you might have ridden many miles before you had heard any; also, you could not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and public prayer. Nobody complained more of our Church government than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, people were become so sober." If this was not religious prosperity, in the truest sense of that expression, we know not what religious prosperity is, nor where it has ever existed. Happy Scotland, when the Lord's-day was held in such blessed sanctity, and when so many hallowed souls felt and enjoyed its peaceful and heavenly rest, at once earnest and foretaste of heaven itself! And woe and shame to degenerate Scotland!—woe unutterable and shame unendurable!—if she ever cease in her faithful and prayerful exertions till her ancient Sabbath sanctity be regained in all its still serenity, and holy rest, and spiritual enjoyment of sacred communion with the Divine Lord of the Sabbath. the Head and King of her witness-bearing Church!

Brief as the preceding historical notices are, we trust they are sufficient to show that there has always existed a direct connexion between Sabbath observance and the true religious prosperity of the Christian Church. From this the conclusion may be fairly drawn, that the connexion which has been found to be inseparable is also essential, even though we might not be able to explain why this should be the case. This further conclusion may also be drawn, that Sabbath-keeping may be regarded as at once a symptom and a test of the religious condition of any professional Church. And it would be no unwarrantable forcing of inferences, were we to conclude, from the same ground, that this must be the case equally with individuals as with Churches. Without entering into any abstract discussion on this point, for which a short treatise cannot allow adequate space, the principle on which the preceding inferences depend may be briefly

stated. The keeping holy to God, or the setting apart, of the seventh portion of time, one whole day in seven, to the purposes of Divine worship and spiritual improvement, has often been represented as an arbitrary appointment, not so directly of a moral nature as the other articles of the Moral Law. Let this be granted, in the first instance—let it be admitted to be arbitrary, to this extent at least, that human reason can discover no cause why the seventh rather than a tenth, or any other proportion, should have been commanded. What follows?—only this, that He who created, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," has thought proper to require that portion of our time, not only for the purpose of promoting our spiritual life and growth, but also, and perhaps especially, as a direct and permanent proof of His sovereignty, and a test of our allegiance. If this be the case—and no man can prove that it is not—then it is of necessity the very highest of all possible moral duties; for it is the test of our love and obedience to our Creator, in the first instance, and to our Redeemer in the next, and therefore to both. Thus viewed, Sabbath observance must necessarily be, to both communities and individuals, a direct and permanent test of the primary moral relation in which they stand to God, their Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. And as he who wilfully breaks one principle of law sets all law at defiance, much more must he who wilfully despises and breaks the very test of allegiance be held guilty of violating the whole law, and setting up the standard of utter and extreme rebellion. Such, indeed, has ever been the case with regard to Sabbath-breaking. It is the almost invariable commencement of the condemned criminal's sad confession, that his career of crime began by Sabbath desecration, and that, having become familiarised with the violation of the first principle of moral allegiance to God, he soon despised every other requirement of law, human and Divine. This mournful experience of the criminal is in per-

fect accordance with the principle which we have stated—a principle which cannot be over-estimated in its profound truth and practical importance. That aspect of apparent arbitrariness, of which weak or prejudiced minds complain, is the very thing which makes Sabbath-keeping the test of man's allegiance to God—the first principle of the highest morality—and both the element and test of spiritual life, equally in Churches and individuals. And we could scarcely breathe a better wish for any Churches, or any professing Christian, than that they would so estimate and so apply Sabbath observance, regarding that as a direct and infallible criterion of spiritual progress and growth in grace and heavenly mindedness—in fitness for that eternal Sabbatism which awaits the people of God. Neither the space or the proper character of this essay will permit us to enter upon an elucidation of this principle, which we regard as equally applicable to Churches and individual believers, and as capable of fully explaining the progress or decline of their religious prosperity, their true spiritual life and character. We conclude by stating it again, that we may leave it with our readers as our concluding words:—*Sabbath observance is essentially a direct and permanent proof of God's sovereignty, and a test of man's allegiance, and must therefore necessarily be, to both communities and individuals, a direct and permanent test of the primary moral relation in which they stand to God, their Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer.*

XI.

INDIRECT INFLUENCE OF THE SABBATH ON THE GENERAL PROSPERITY OF NATIONS; AND ESPECIALLY ON THEIR INTELLIGENCE, TRADE AND COMMERCE, SOCIAL ORDER, AND LIBERTIES.

BY JAMES SEATON REID, D.D.,
PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

THE wisdom of God is truly infinite. He seeth "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done."—(Isa. xlvi. 10.) He unerringly adapts all agencies, whether material or mental, to their work, and overrules them to the accomplishment of His eternal purposes at the time and in the way He had foreseen and appointed.

Consequently the means which He employs for attaining any proposed end can never fail. His dispensations always fulfil their mission. His institutions unfailingly effect the precise purposes for which they were established; though we may not be able in all cases to discern what these purposes were, nor how they have been accomplished. Nay more: Divine ordinances do not merely fulfil their special and primary objects, but, while realising these, they are designed and calculated to promote many other beneficial ends. The highest effort of human wisdom is to devise means which may, with certainty, accomplish some single purpose; and all experience testifies how seldom this measure of success is attained. But such are the inexhaustible resources of Divine wisdom, that His appointed means, His institutions, never fail to confer almost countless blessings on those who re-

verently observe them; so that, amid this multiplicity of attendant blessings, it is often difficult to distinguish between those which were primarily, and those which were indirectly designed to be bestowed.

Thus it is with the Sabbath. Tried by this test, it proves itself to be a truly Divine ordinance. It has not only answered the special purposes of heavenly wisdom and love to man in its appointment; it has at the same time been attended with so many other beneficent results, that one often feels at a loss to determine which of these are the special blessings its Divine Founder intended it primarily to confer, and which are the supplementary ones that follow in their train.

How numerous, varied, and precious are the objects which the Sabbath, from the day of its institution, was designed to accomplish! Under the PATRIARCHAL dispensation it was a mute but eloquent witness for the existence of God, His unity, His creative power, His sovereignty over His creatures, and their responsibility to Him. Under the MOSAIC economy, the Sabbath bore continued testimony not only to these truths, but also to the providential and moral government of God in its preservation and re-enactment, and His supreme right to the homage and worship of His people; it bore testimony to His beneficent regard for their temporal and eternal welfare; it taught them to look, through its hallowed use, for blessings on themselves and their nation; and it indicated a future period which would be pregnant with richer blessings and ennobled with a purer worship. Under the CHRISTIAN dispensation, while all these fundamental truths are still emphatically inculcated by the Sabbath, it has moreover become a memorial of redeeming love—a witness for the completion of that "better covenant" which was ratified by the resurrection of its Surety—a remembrance of Him "who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification"—an attestation to the Deity of Him who had "power to lay down his life, and power to take

it again" on this day—and a manifestation of His kingly prerogatives when He proclaimed himself to be the "Lord of the Sabbath." It has become a source of still more precious blessings to the people of God, refreshing, edifying, sanctifying them; a season for meditating on past sin and present infirmity, and for rejoicing in a finished salvation and a purchased inheritance. And it still continues to be a type of that heavenly "Sabbath that remaineth to the people of God," and one of the most efficient means of preparing them for its enjoyment.

These are some of the primary and special ends which the Lord of the Sabbath had in view when He instituted it, and which it has never failed to answer. But, true to its Divine origin, a long train of attendant blessings, corporeal and mental, intellectual and moral, personal and domestic, social and national, temporal and eternal, flow from its sanctified observance. Several of these have been fully unfolded in other treatises of this series. Its blessed influence on the TEMPORAL WELLBEING OF MEN, AND MORE ESPECIALLY OF THE WORKING CLASSES;* its HAPPY ADAPTATION TO MAN'S INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL NATURE;† its benign influence on the religion and piety of INDIVIDUALS,‡ FAMILIES,§ and CHURCHES,‖ have all been separately discussed and clearly demonstrated. It has been allotted to this treatise to illustrate the influence of the Sabbath in another and still wider sphere—IN PROMOTING THE GENERAL PROSPERITY AND WELLBEING OF NATIONS.

That a right observance of the Lord's-day lies at the foundation of NATIONAL happiness and prosperity, is a truth which follows necessarily from the proofs already given, in other treatises of this series, of its hallowed influence on individuals, families, and Churches. Let these be advancing in "whatsoever things are true, honest, and just—pure, lovely, and of good report," and the community at large cannot fail to participate in this moral proficiency, and to be

* Essay, iv. † Ibid., v. ‡ Ibid., vii. & viii. § Ibid., ix. ‖ Ibid., x.

elevated in reputation and influence. A nation is but an aggregate of individuals. Its character is, sooner or later, determined by theirs; and oscillates towards good or evil just as an influential, though it may not be always an actual, majority of its people are rising or falling in the scale of moral excellence.

This connexion is so obvious and immediate, that it is unnecessary to enlarge upon it. It is alluded to here, simply because on this connexion rests one of the most direct and satisfactory proofs which can be adduced in favour of the NATIONAL value of the Sabbath. The community at large is benefited in the same proportion and in the same respects in which individuals are profited by the Sabbath. What, then, are the blessings which it confers on those who "remember" its holy purposes, and who "keep" it in a right spirit and manner? and what connexion have these blessings with national prosperity? Let us enumerate a few of these. The Sabbath rests both the wearied and the toilworn body, as well as the overwrought and overstrained mind; and it successively renovates and invigorates both for their daily corporeal and intellectual labour. It brings together in the sanctuary employers and employed, masters and servants, for one day, at least, under circumstances calculated to prompt mutual respect and confidence, and to give each a deeper interest in the other's welfare. It secures to all classes the opportunity of spending an unbroken day amid the dear domestic circle, and prompting the highest and noblest interests of themselves and their families. It deepens their reverence for the sovereign authority of the Lord of the Sabbath, who every week appeals to them for the homage of this one day in seven. It brings them into ennobling converse with the Word of God, and with the great and good of past generations. It strengthens and expands the minds even of the best educated classes, and still more of those who have not been so favoured, by engaging them at stated periods in meditations on the elevating truths of revelation,

and those sublime mysteries of godliness into which angels themselves desire to look. It controls and purifies the moral sensibilities, by exhibiting week after week, in the solemn assembly, a perfect standard of virtue in the Divine law, by urging the imperative obligations on conscience and life by the weightiest considerations which can be addressed to rational beings. It counteracts the chilling selfishness which uninterrupted contact with the world never fails to engender, by breaking in at short and regular intervals upon its engagements, dissipating its anxieties, and giving room for all the generous sensibilities of the heart to be cherished and expanded in the delightful intercourse of children, friends, and fellow-worshippers. It reminds men of the inalienable right of God to their whole time, though in condescension and mercy he demands the special consecration of only a seventh portion of it. And it teaches them, that for the "six days" in which they are permitted to "labour," and commanded to "do all their work," they are as responsible to God as for the Sabbath itself; and that they are bound to live every day, not merely for themselves, but for others, for their country, their religion, the world—for Him "who died for them and on this day rose again." In a word, the direct and obvious tendency of the Sabbath, is to render those who "remember to keep it holy" diligent and industrious, enlightened and intelligent, upright and conscientious, disinterested and patriotic, pious and religious. And by gradually augmenting the number and influence of such men in a community, it controls and modifies public opinion; it diffuses social order among all classes —the result of mutual respect and confidence; it purifies the legislation and policy of a nation; it expands and elevates its views, arms it against every species of oppression and injustice, and fills it with generous impulses towards the attainment of the highest good for itself, and the whole family of man.

If these be the invariable fruits of a well-directed Sabbath observance, is not this institute inseparably bound up with the general wellbeing and prosperity of nations? Can any community undervalue and neglect it with impunity? Must not its desecration, especially that systematic desecration which is enforced by the authority of a nation, in the shape of Sabbath mails, and Sabbath travelling, and Sabbath recreations, and, in some kingdoms, of national assemblages, processions, and ceremonials on this day —must not such authoritative desecration, sooner or later, by disparaging Divine authority, perverting individual conscience, and diminishing facilities for religious instruction, deteriorate the moral feelings and principles of a people, weaken their convictions of duty, and thus directly injure the character and happiness of a nation? Can the good of a people be promoted by rendering them less intelligent, less religious, and less moral, than they might otherwise have been? Can that kingdom enjoy substantial prosperity, the mass of whose population are retained within the bounds of an outward decency and morality, merely by the conventional restraints of society, and not by deep and honest convictions of duty? And how are these salutary convictions to exist apart from a well-grounded knowledge of God, and an intelligent acquaintance with the principles of Christian doctrine and morals? How are the mass of a community to acquire this religious knowledge, which is the only stable foundation of a holy life, if there be no Sabbath cessation from daily toil, no Sabbath assemblies, no Sabbath instruction in and out of the Church; and if there be, for the rising generation, no Sabbath training at home, and no early familiarity with the soul-stirring and life-giving themes of religion?

The history of nations amply confirms these views of the national value of the Sabbath. Look where we may, we find them corroborated in the progress and advancement of the Sabbath-honouring and Sab-

bath-keeping communities, and in the partial and unstable progress of those that profane and abuse this day. The scale of national prosperity, whether in the Old World or in the New, may be graduated by the degree of respect and reverence for the Sabbath which is prevalent in each State. In the Old World, let Britain be contrasted with Spain; or in the New, let the United States be contrasted with Mexico or any of the South American Republics—and the result will amply confirm the truth of these observations. And even in distinct portions of the same State, a similar connexion is obvious. The contrast between Scotland and Ireland, between Holland and Belgium when united, and between the Northern and Southern States of the North American Republic, still more emphatically evinces (let it be explained as it may) how closely allied Sabbath keeping is with the prosperity, and Sabbath profanation with the limited progress and partial development, of a community.

It may therefore be affirmed as an undoubted truth, that the right observance of the Sabbath is indissolubly connected with the general wellbeing of kingdoms. But so prolific of good is this blessed day, that its auspicious influence on national interests may be destinctly traced in various directions. It may be shown to exert a beneficial interest on—I. THE INTELLIGENCE; II. THE TRADE AND COMMERCE; III. THE SOCIAL ORDER; and IV. THE LIBERTIES of nations.

I. The Sabbath elevates the general INTELLIGENCE of a nation. This term is not meant to apply to the proficiency of a people in science or literature. To aid in the advancement of mere intellectual education does not by any means lie within the province of the Sabbath. Such an object, though most valuable and indispensable in its own place, is wholly unsuited to the spirit and purport of the Lord's-day; which was set apart by Jehovah, and all worldly pursuits enjoined to be laid aside, in order that higher themes

than any connected with science or learning might engage the attention and occupy the minds of men. But so far from the weekly suspension of these studies being calculated to injure, its tendency is to promote the progress of education and secular knowledge among a people. For the mind can no more work incessantly day after day than can the body. By the operation of that law which renders the seasonable rest of a seventh day absolutely necessary to fit the corporeal frame for resuming daily toil with renewed activity; so the Sabbath suspension of mental toil braces and strengthens all the intellectual faculties, and starts them afresh every week with invigorated energy in the pursuit of knowledge and of truth. In this way, as well as in others, it were easy to show that the mere physical rest of the Sabbath is not remotely connected with the progress of a community even in scientific acquirements and secular knowledge.

But it is not under this aspect that we consider the Sabbath as calculated to promote the INTELLIGENCE of a nation. That national quality is estimated, not so much by the brilliant achievements of a few profound philosophers and men of genius, as by the mental activity, the practical sagacity, and prudent forethought of the general population. An intelligent people is not necessarily a learned, nor even what is called a clever, people; unless these qualities are under the control of sound judgment, and accompanied with a due sense of personal responsibility. There is an obvious distinction, too, between a skilful and intelligent people. A skilful man knows thoroughly his own special employment, and is expert in performing all its peculiar functions. But unless his mind rises above the narrow limits of his handicraft or profession, unless to his manual of mental dexterity he conjoins moral elevation of character, unless he has ascertained his own position and duties in the community, and knows what is within and what is beyond the sphere of his hopes

and responsibilities, he cannot be properly considered an intelligent individual. An idolatrous or profane people may be clever and skilful? but it would be a gross perversion of terms to call them intelligent or enlightened so long as they are ignorant of God and of themselves, of the moral economy in which they form a part, of the true end of their being, and the means of its attainment.

Now, while the Sabbath does not profess to add to the learning or skill of a people, it has a direct tendency to augment their intelligence. And this it accomplishes principally by bringing them into close and familiar contact with moral and religious truth. "The law of the Lord maketh wise the simple." Nothing expands and quickens the mind so effectually as those sublime and exciting contemplations of the Divine nature, of the ruin and recovery of man, of the providential government of God, of the eternal obligations of the moral law, and the harmony of human experience therewith, which Sabbath ordinances and exercises statedly present to the mind and heart of their observers. These exercises elevate every man above the dull round of daily employments, and the narrow range of worldly speculations, which contract and enfeeble the mind. They enlarge his views, quicken his sensibilities, and invigorate his intellectual powers. They habituate him to weigh the force of evidence, and estimate the strength of arguments applied to subjects of the highest and noblest kind. They train him, with more or less success, to habits of reflection and consideration, and inspire him with the hope and desire of attaining to something better and higher than what this world can offer. Finally, these Sabbath exercises impart to him who joins in them, however humble in station, great strength of character. They enable him to look beyond present allurements, to sacrifice immediate advantages for future good, and to hold in check the lower and sensual, while he cherishes the higher and spiritual, tendencies of his nature.

In these results of Sabbath observance lie the elements of true intellectual and moral elevation. A Sabbath-keeping labourer under influences such as these from his youth up, however uneducated in other respects, becomes an intelligent man. The most enlightened in the realm have not unfrequently been indebted to his powers of observation and reasoning for accessions to their knowledge. Some of the most valuable improvements in art and manufactures have emanated from men who had scarcely any intellectual culture beyond what their Sabbath occupations had imparted to them. In our own day we have seen the bounds of natural science enlarged, and the regions of literature and philosophy adorned by the pens of humble but Sabbath-keeping artisans. Godless critics, undervaluing the influence of such Sabbath-training as this, have vainly endeavoured to account for the intellectual superiority of one in whom the world saw only an illiterate tinker. Nor can any explanation of that unprecedented phenomenon in the world of letters—THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS—be accepted, save that which traces it up to the Sabbath-keeping, with all the attendant scriptural training, of its otherwise uneducated author.

What a delightful confirmation of these remarks has been recently furnished by the Prize Essays of the Sabbath-honouring workmen of Britain! These productions, amid their other excellencies, which it does not lie within the scope of this treatise to notice, display in general great intelligence and shrewdness of observation, with admirable powers of reasoning, sound judgment, and well-balanced minds, firmly poised on the stable pillars of pure morality and true religion. We meet in them with no narrow prejudices nor contracted views, no idle theories nor utopian schemes for the elevation of their own class; no peevish discontent with their position in the social scale, nor selfish jealousy of their more highly-favoured brethren. How did these "sons of toil" acquire the intelligence and elevation of mind which

characterise these essays? Not, certainly, from any special advantages of secular education, but almost entirely from the happy influence of their Sabbath-keeping habits and exercises. How much higher among the nations would even Britain stand in the scale of intelligence, if the sound sense and enlarged views, the genuine patriotism and the well-directed philanthropy of these thousand artisans, were more generally diffused among the millions of her population! What might not our country become, if the principles inculcated in these essays were steadily actuating and guiding the private and public enterprises of all classes in the nation, from the highest of her nobles and legislators down to the humblest of her mechanics and labourers!

In fine, to secure an undisturbed weekly Sabbath rest for weekly Sabbath duties, ought to be an object of national anxiety and national legislation, because it would undoubtedly elevate the intellectual as well as the moral character of the people, and prove an unfailing source of national superiority.

II. The Sabbath is also instrumental in benefiting the TRADE AND COMMERCE of a nation. This position might be established by a variety of considerations, on which it is unnecessary to enlarge here. Thus, it might be proved by referring to the well-known influence of a sanctified weekly rest, which, by emancipating the mind from the corroding anxieties of business, recreating it by a change of occupation, and strengthening it by religious exercises, fits men week after week for resuming their employment with renovated vigour both of mind and body. It might also be shown that the Sabbath, by its tendency to quicken the intellect, augment the intelligence, and expand the views of those who rightly keep it, is thereby also qualifying a people for conducting their secular affairs all the more wisely and successfully. Nor must it be omitted, in estimating the benefits which the Sabbath confers on the trade and commerce of a nation, to point to its tendency to train up a

community not only in habits of steady diligence in their callings, which is one of the chief sources of success in business, but also in habits of economy, self-control, and prudent forethought, by which capital is accumulated, the wealth of a nation increased, and its commercial prosperity extended and consolidated.

But without dwelling on these topics, there are other considerations which are deserving of special notice. The successful prosecution of trade and commerce depends not merely on the skill, energy, and perseverence, but also, and that chiefly, on the honesty, integrity, and patient industry of those engaged therein, whether they be employers or employed. These moral, rather than any physical or even intellectual, qualities lie at the foundation of mercantile prosperity. Mutual confidence, founded on inflexible uprightness, is the very soul of trade. It cannot flourish without it. So obvious is this connexion, that even mere worldly policy compels many an unprincipled scoffer at religion and its Sabbaths to be faithful to his engagements. But this conventional honesty is never able to withstand sudden or urgent temptations. It is only that integrity which springs from religious principle, from the fear of God, the sense of obligation to Divine mercy, the love of holiness, and settled convictions of duty to others, which will prove firm and incorruptible.

Now, this personal integrity is invariably co-existent with personal religion, and is inseparable from it. Whatever promotes the one, sustains the other. The more prevalent genuine religion is in a nation—that is, the greater the number of those who are sincerely actuated by its motives and upheld by its principles, the more prevalent, assuredly, will commercial fidelity and mutual confidence become; and the more steadily will a high standard of mercantile integrity be maintained throughout the community.

But such a religious influence as this cannot possibly be upheld among a people without the Sabbath:—

First, Because its authoritative rest is absolutely necessary, to enable mankind in general, or as a nation, to acquire religious knowledge, which is not intuitive, but, like every other species of knowledge, must be taught and learned. *Secondly*, Because the holy observance of the Sabbath is the only efficient means of preserving and extending this knowledge, when once introduced among a people. *Thirdly*, Because all genuine morality is so indissolubly allied to religious knowledge, that it cannot exist independently of it. Public opinion, which is the result of whatever amount of religious knowledge and principle may be prevalent in a community, may create a factitious standard, and uphold a code of honour which has been mistaken for genuine morality. But let this amount of religious knowledge in a nation decline, and the Sabbath, its indispensable handmaiden, be despised, and then this fluctuating standard of a conventional morality will decline too; until, among a people enslaved by superstition or perverted by infidelity, where the Sabbath is violated by secular business or frivolous amusement, there will be no such thing left as true Christian integrity between man and man. Under such a state of things, self-interest becomes the sole regulating motive. So long, indeed, as men are persuaded that it is their interest to act uprightly, truth and integrity may possibly be respected and maintained. But let some pressing contingency offer a tempting advantage in return for violating these obligations, and forthwith the standard of duty is fatally lowered, unless it be counteracted by the prevalence of religious principle. Not merely individuals, but entire communities have not been able to withstand a temptation of this sort. The world has seen the portentous spectacle of palpable dishonesty being converted, by the force of a vicious public opinion, into unquestioned probity and virtue.

It need scarcely be added, that the fabric of commercial prosperity can never be built on such a shifting quicksand as a conventional morality.

from religious principle and Sabbath observance. The history of commerce amply corroborates this assertion. Has manufacturing or mercantile enterprise ever continued to flourish where religion is corrupted, and the Lord's-day profaned? Has that incorruptible integrity, and that mutual confidence, which constitute the sole vitality of trade, been ever maintained, except in connexion with a pure Gospel and an unviolated Sabbath? Has infidelity or superstition ever allured trade or commerce to abandon the security afforded by Christianity and the Sabbath, and take refuge under the delusive protection of godless legislation or of priestly supremacy, where there is virtually no Sabbath, nor any religion save that which is emotional, unreal, and inoperative?

But farther, while the maintenance of Christian integrity among *all classes* is essential to the prosperity of the trade and commerce of a nation, we wish to draw attention to the fact, that its prevalence is especially necessary among the *employed classes*. If a comparison were admissible in such a case, it might be maintained that it is even more necessary among them than among the class of employers. Among the latter a higher secular education, enlarged knowledge of the world, and the influence of public opinion, often operate in sustaining personal integrity where true religion is wanting. But the employed classes ordinarily are not subject to these extraneous influences. If *they* possess not Christian principles, founded on religious knowledge and maintained by Sabbath observances, there is nothing to preserve them from becoming careless, dishonest, profligate, and unworthy of confidence. It need not be asked, Could either the production or interchange of manufactures flourish, where, through the neglect of religion and its Sabbaths, this has become the prevalent character of workmen, artisans, overseers, or agents? Universal experience has declared it to be impossible. Trade and commerce must sooner or later decline, wherever the employed classes, through

want of early education, over-work, and neglect of the Sabbath, are permitted to sink in the scale of morality and religion.

It is from a conviction of the truth of this statement that Britain has, from time to time, had recourse to various legislative expedients, in order to elevate the character of her employed population. One only of these may be adverted to here, from its connexion with our present subject. I refer to the lessening of the hours of labour on the Saturday, evidently with the view of enabling certain working classes to wind up their weekly dealings, and arrange their out-door family affairs, in order that there may be no temptation to encroach on the leisure and the duties of the Sabbath. But it may well be asked, How comes it that the Legislature, or rather the nation, so considerately secures a portion of the Saturday for a large section of her employed population, and yet persists in condemning another large section to lose the benefit even of the Lord's-day itself? Is it not strangely inconsistent to compel the many thousand officials connected with railways and the post-office to labour on the Sabbath, to the whole of which day God has given them an absolute right, at the very same time that other classes are relieved from their workshops and manufactories on a part of the Saturday, for which indulgence no such claim can be pleaded?

The inconsistency and impolicy of such a course become still more obvious, when it is remembered, that the class who are thus cut off from the full enjoyment of the blessed Sabbath, who are prevented from devoting themselves, in the midst of their families, to the religious exercises of this "Pearl of Days," and whose moral and religious character is thereby to a certain extent impaired, are the very class on whose fidelity and uprightness one of the most important operations of commercial activity depends for its success. What is more essential to the prosperous prosecution of trade than the faithful transmission of its correspondence? And yet, as a nation, we blindly and perversely in-

trust this operation to persons whose fidelity we at the same time undermine by compulsory labour on the Sabbath. We force them on that day to leave their domestic circle, to attend at their post of weekly labour, to receive, weigh, assort, take money for, convey, and, in some thousand localities, deliver letters, to the violation of the rest of that day so authoritatively enjoined by God, and to the neglect of their religious duties, on which their integrity is alone based; for it can never for a moment be admitted, that the design of the Sabbath, as embodied in the fourth commandment, is complied with, when merely the hour or two occupied in public worship is left free. Ought not this day, therefore, to be given, whole and entire, to this important class of public functionaries? Could the nation do anything more essential to uphold the moral and religious character of these men, on whom commercial intercourse and prosperity so much depend, than secure to them what God has expressly declared to be their right—the free and uninterrupted enjoyment of Sabbath rest and Sabbath ordinances? One step, at least, ought to be taken without delay. Let the post-office officials in every town in the kingdom enjoy the same privilege of an unbroken Sabbath which their brethren in labour and responsibility enjoy in London. No inconvenience from such an arrangement is experienced in that immense emporium of trade and commerce, whose population now equals that of the entire kingdom of Scotland only a few years ago. And how can any other city consistently demand, as necessary to their interests, what the merchants of that vast metropolis have so frequently and so decidedly repudiated as unnecessary, and even injurious? (See Essay, No. 12.)

In every view of the subject, the TRADE AND COMMERCE of a nation are essentially benefited by the right observance of the Sabbath.

III. The Sabbath is intimately connected with the preservation of SOCIAL ORDER in a nation. That community is in a state of the highest social organisation

in which all classes enjoy protection and security; in which justice is impartially administered, the law respected and reverenced, vice discountenanced and punished, authority faithfully exercised, and obedience cheerfully rendered, in which all ranks know their respective rights and duties, and neither injure nor encroach upon each other; and in which every act of injustice, tyranny, or rebellion, meets with a prompt and indignant resistance.

The chief dangers to social order arise either from the oppression of the higher, or from the turbulence of the lower classes. On the one hand, let the ruling power in a nation disregard the claims of its subjects to enjoy the fruits of their industry; let it abandon them to the heartless grasp of avarice, till their overwrought frames are ready to sink in despair; let it deny them reasonable protection against manifest injustice and oppression; let it heap privileges on the wealthy and powerful, while proportionable advantages are withheld from the less favoured classes;—and it will be impossible but that outraged humanity will, sooner or later, burst the ordinary restraints of authority, and in the rude effort to obtain the redress of its grivances, involve the nation in ruinous disorder. On the other hand, let the productive classes, while they may have few real grievances to complain of, be suffered to grow up in ignorance and vice; let them be cut off from the elevating influence of religion and her Sabbaths, and be exposed to the demoralising fallacies of infidelity; let them become alienated from domestic ties, and uninfluenced by the restraints of character and the sympathies of pious friends and fellow-worshippers; let them be familiarised with all that is squalid, unhealthy, and comfortless in their dwellings and among their households;—and the community, which makes no effort to rescue its working population from these debasing influences, will assuredly one day pay the penalty of its suicidal neglect. The mass of the people will become disaffected, discontented, and

turbulent. Imaginary grievances will chafe and irritate them. Utopian schemes for bettering their condition, by some organic change, will easily delude them. Political theories for a new distribution of wealth and power will tempt them to look upon all wealth as robbery, all rulers as tyrants, and all employers as oppressors; until at length the bonds of society and the restraints of law will be violated, and one wide-spread revolt against all order and authority will sweep with desolating fury over the nation.

These are no imaginary forebodings. They have been realised again and again in the history of nations. The recent revolutions in several of the Continental states have supplied additional illustrations of the truth of both sides of the picture. On the one hand we have seen in Italy the revolt of oppressed subjects against the mal-administration and arbitrary power of their rulers, spreading disorder and violence throughout the land, and probably retarding it by a century in the career of social improvement. And, on the other hand, in France we have seen a noble country convulsed by the insurrection of a demoralised working population, deluded by the wild theories of an infidel socialism, to seek the overthrow of all law and order, as an indispensable step to their own aggrandisement. Assuredly, the highest interests of a nation are never in more imminent danger than when its employed classes are thus perverted and demoralised. Its position is perilous, for its base is undermined; and if it fall, the calamity will be overwhelming; for, as an eminent statesman has remarked, "In policy, as in architecture, the ruin is greatest when it begins with the foundation."

Every lover of his country will anxiously inquire —How are these perilous evils to be obviated? How can that well-regulated order, so essential to the well-being and prosperity of a nation, be permanently maintained? In reply, it may be observed, that while political measures may do much, and have

done much, to preserve the peace and security of a community, they cannot do all that is necessary. The best governed States have failed, by mere constitutional safeguards, or legislative enactments, or coercive restraints, to remedy or prevent the social evils referred to. One thing is essential to their cure, and if this be wanting, all other measures will be ineffectual; and this one thing is—the conservative influence of true religion, with its Sabbath rest, its Sabbath assemblies, and its Sabbath exercises. Or, to state the same truth in another form, the Sabbath, rightly observed, is the great preserver of SOCIAL ORDER:—

First, Because it is indispensable to the existence and extension of religion in a community. It is religious influences, sustained by Sabbath observances, which will alone teach *the ruling classes* to be just and impartial, and to respect and maintain the rights of all under their authority; which will render them the consistent enemies of oppression, and the true friends of constitutional order and liberty. And it is religion, with her Sabbaths, which will alone preserve *the employed classes* from being the dupes of political agitators and infidel schemers; which, by teaching them to be industrious, temperate, and provident, surrounds them with comforts adequate to their position; which cheers and elevates them by the domestic enjoyments and social blessings it collects around them; and which thereby makes them prosperous and contented, and converts them into the best upholders of lawful authority and social order. We need never be apprehensive of finding a lawless or turbulent population where their Sabbath leisure is employed in the solemnising exercises of religion, in drawing closer the endearing ties of domestic fellowship, and in deepening the influence of moral obligation on the heart and conscience. A well-spent Sabbath, by upholding and diffusing religion, becomes a powerful barrier against social convulsions. Hence it is that the enemies of peace and

order are invariably profaners of the Sabbath; and almost the first lessons which they teach their unhappy dupes is, to disown and violate it. Their unhallowed discussions, their public meetings, and their private cabals, are held on this holy day; and, true to their vocation, this section of the community are always found to be the most clamorous for legalising every species of Sabbath profanation.

Secondly, The Sabbath is a powerful conservator of SOCIAL ORDER, by its tendency to unite all classes of its observers in the bonds of a common brotherhood. It places on an equality both rich and poor, employers and employed, for at least a seventh portion of their time. It reminds them that they have interests in common, which far exceed, in importance and value, the worldly distinctions by which they are separated. It collects them, week after week, in one assembly, where the artificial disparities of rank and station have no place; where all are actuated by the same emotions, sit under the same instruction, and are admitted to the same privileges. It inspires the affluent with feelings of sympathy and respect for their less favoured brethren, associated with them in the same Sabbath exercises. It inculcates on the industrious classes the comparative worthlessness of those worldly advantages which inflame the cupidity and incite the restless passions of others, while it teaches them to aim at the possession of more permanent and satisfying blessings. And it fixes the attention of all on that Sabbatical rest in a future world, where all that separates class from class in this world will be for ever excluded, and where the Sovereign and the subject, the rich and the poor, will stand on the perfect equality of sinners redeemed by Divine grace, and will sing the same song of praise to "Him who loved them and gave Himself for them." Thus has the Sabbath a powerful tendency to remove that jealousy and alienation among the different classes of society which often lie at the bottom of social disorganisation, and which

if suffered to fester in a community, are sure to break out in acts of disorder and turbulence. It exerts the same happy influence in binding class to class which mutual intercourse among nations, and their uniting in enterprises of common benefit to all, are well known to exert in removing national prejudices, and allaying national jealousies and antipathies.

He is therefore a true friend to the preservation of the social order of his country, who faithfully observes the Sabbath, interests his family or friends in its delightful exercises, promotes its general sanctification, and protects its hallowed rest from all encroachments. An American reviewer has pertinently observed in connexion with this topic—"The regular congregating of friends and neighbours on the Sabbath in the place of worship, to mingle their feelings before the throne of God, tends to unite them in the purest and strongest bands. The differences arising from wealth and other adventitious circumstances here disappear. The high are humbled without being depressed. The low are exalted without being elated. The chord which vibrates in one breast is felt in all the others, awakening the consciousness of community of origin and of nature. They learn that God has made of one flesh all the dwellers upon earth; that He has breathed one spirit, bearing His own image, into them; placed all under the same benevolent laws; offers the same glorious immortality to all, and has thus bound them together as one great brotherhood. It is hence obvious, that of all institutions the Sabbath is the most directly efficacious in promoting peace, charity, justice, sympathy, and all other amiable feelings."

IV. The Sabbath is favourable to the preservation of the LIBERTIES of nations. Christianity has always been the sole foundation of genuine liberty. Wherever, by means of its Sabbaths, its healthful spirit has breathed upon a nation, there freedom has flourished; and both despotism in the ruler, and servility in the ruled, have withered and died. True religion uniformly

inspires its disciples with that reverence for constituted authority as "the ordinance of God," and that sense of personal responsibility in every relation, out of which, when combined, spring loyalty and obedience in the subject, "not for wrath, but for conscience sake;" and in the sovereign, rectitude, impartiality, and respect for the rights of all classes of the people. The very same influence which Sabbath assemblies and Sabbath exercises exert in securing uprightness and confidence between employer and employed, extends to both governors and governed, teaching them to abstain conscientiously from all encroachments on each other's rights, and to fulfil with fidelity their reciprocal duties. And should the deplorable contingency occur, of either class being so unmindful of their mutual obligations as forcibly to violate the rights and privileges of the other—in such a painful case, Christian rulers and Christian subjects feel themselves equally bound to maintain, with moderation and firmness, their respective constitutional rights, as alike essential to the welfare and happiness of the entire community.

Hence it is that true liberty has blessed those nations only, among whom religion and her Sabbaths have been reverenced and obeyed. And as the amount of Sabbath observance is an infallible criterion of the amount of religious influence actuating a community; so, by the manner in which the Lord's-day is observed, the degree in which rational freedom prevails may be almost unerringly measured. The fact is unquestionable, that the Sabbath-honouring nations are the freedom-blessed nations; and that those who honour it the most enjoy the fullest amount of civil liberty. Let the non-religious politician account for this social phenomenon as he may, he must admit its reality. The Christian philosopher rejoices to recognise in it the natural product of an adequate cause; and his faith would receive a shock if history exhibited a different result.

Hence also it is, that wherever the Sabbath is

systematically profaned as a day of labour or mere amusement, and wherever superstition has enjoined the observance of saintly holidays, and abandoned the Lord's festival-day to be violated with impunity—from every such country true liberty has invariably fled, and oppression and slavery have become the inheritance of its deluded people. Stript of their right to an undisturbed Sabbath, enjoying no edifying or ennobling Sabbath exercises, either in their churches or their families, and deprived of such Sabbath instruction as would expand their minds, teach them their duties, or cherish a sense of personal responsibility—among a people so trained, despotic rulers, aided and often instigated by a crafty priesthood, have easily triumphed over the social and political rights of their subjects, and despoiled them of their inalienable liberties. And lest a season of solemn consideration of the Sabbath might, by some mischance, awaken them to a consciousness of their degraded condition as rational and accountable beings, the invariable policy of such rulers is, to encourage public diversions on the Sabbath, and by an unceasing round of frivolous amusements on that day, to expel all serious thought, and keep the people, if possible, contented in their chains. It is with this view that the Romanist sovereigns in Italy and elsewhere, and, one blushes to add, some of the Protestant Princes of Germany, who disregard the rights of their subjects, appropriate no inconsiderable portion of the public revenue to defray the expense of operas and other theatrical entertainments on the Sabbath, in order to bring these perverting amusements within the reach of as many of their subjects as possible. Experience has taught them, that they need not dread trampling on those whose minds have been enfeebled, and their moral principles corrupted, by Sabbath profanation in these odious forms. These sovereigns know full well how intimate is the connexion between the maintenance of violated Sabbaths and the preservation of their usurped and irresponsible power. They

bear unconscious but conclusive testimony to the truth of our position—that well-spent Sabbaths are among the most efficient supports of civil liberty.

But we need not look abroad for illustrations of this truth. The history of our own country has confirmed it by many instructive proofs. Who were they that laid the foundation of the noble fabric of British freedom—the admiration of the civilised world? Let the historian and philosopher, Hume—all whose prejudices as an infidel were opposed to religious men—answer the inquiry. He freely acknowledges, in his HISTORY, that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled and was preserved by the Puritans alone; and that it was to this sect, exemplary above all others for Sabbath observance, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution. Yes! It was these God-fearing and Sabbath-honouring men who nobly resisted arbitrary power; and who, after the struggles of nearly three generations, at length succeeded in establishing the respective rights of ruler and ruled on a constitutional basis, which has secured a larger amount of honour and obedience to the sovereign, and of freedom and protection to the subject, than has ever been enjoyed elsewhere.

And what, we may ask, sustained the resolute resistance of these men to what they then considered to be, and what has since been freely admitted to have been, a galling tyranny in both sacred and secular concerns? It was the hallowed influence of their Sabbath services, and Sabbath exercises, which, by teaching them their duty to God, and to one another, and endearing to them their faith and their families, inspired them with indomitable ardour in the cause of civil and religious liberty. Some of the ill-advised monarchs, whose arbitrary measures they were constrained to resist, clearly discerned the influence which sanctified Sabbaths exerted, in cherishing among the people a spirit of freedom and independence. Hence one of their artful schemes for quenching this spirit, so hostile to their projects, and

rendering the general population insensible to the value of their civil rights, was to break down the authority and right observance of this holy day. Accordingly they published, more than once, that obnoxious proclamation called "The Book of Sports," which authorised public games, such as dancing, shooting, leaping, &c., on every Sabbath afternoon; and commanded all bishops and ministers to recommend their observance to their people. This deep-laid plot against both the religion and the liberties of the nation, was providentially defeated. But it stands in history, as a beacon to warn us in all time coming, that every sanctioned desecration of the Lord's-day is, among its many other evils, an offence against the constitution of the nation; that it is calculated to destroy a sense of personal responsibility, and a love of freedom; that it fosters either a spirit of unreasoning and abject servility on the one hand; or, on the other, a dangerous spirit of turbulence and sedition, which, under the name of liberty, is often aiming at the overthrow of social order and legitimate authority.

Let every lover of his country, therefore, firmly uphold the Divine authority of the Sabbath as one of the best bulwarks of national safety and prosperity, alike beneficial in its influence on the intelligence, the trade and commerce, the social order, and the liberties of his native land.

XII.

SIN AND EVILS OF SABBATH MAILS.

BY THE REV. ANDREW SYMINGTON, D.D.,
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PAISLEY.

In arranging a series of treatises on the Sabbath, it was impossible, with any consistency, to omit one on the Sabbath Mail—the sin being manifest on the grand principles on which we advocate the Sabbath cause, and the evils being great and widely spread. Since the treatises were announced, the interest of the public mind has been awakened to the great argument in general, and to this practical part of it in particular; and movements have been made in several quarters, which have given expression to public opinion on the evil of the Sabbath mails, and the press has given forth publications on the subject, of less and greater extent, as almost to supersede the execution of the task we had prescribed to ourselves. Though unable to present the subject in new or stronger lights, or to give strength to the argument, or to make appeals of even equal power, we feel our obligation to redeem our pledge.

We are fully aware that we encounter, in the outset, a strong prejudice from the universally felt and acknowledged benefits of the Public Post. We entertain a high estimation of these advantages, and regard with admiration the pitch of improvement which the postal establishment has now reached. In despatch, punctuality, diffusion, and safety, it exceeds anything that could have been anticipated, and meets almost everything that could be wished. Persons prevented intercourse by local separation and other causes, can now communicate daily, and even

oftener, at a trifling expense; and intelligence in business, science, literature, politics, and in every matter of public interest, circulates widely and gratuitously, like the light of day or the air of heaven. Nor is this confined to a favoured locality, but spread over the length and breadth of the land —we may almost say the world; for persons sundered by the globe's diameter can now correspond in comparatively a brief period of time. Any attempt, therefore, to place the mail under restriction, is ready to be regarded with apprehension and offence, as the individual would be who would maliciously shut for a time the sluice which supplies a large community with water; or the person who, to indulge some capricious freak, or cover some selfish or resentful purpose, would stop the supplies of a gasometer, and place the streets and dwellings of a great city in midnight darkness. We deprecate every unjust interference with the operations of the post-office, and we hope to make it evident that the restriction for which we are to plead is not only required by high moral considerations, in deference to an authority which should not be questioned, but contributes in no small degree to the interests of individuals and of society. Regulations are necessary to efficiency and safety, and restrictions promoting these and other objects are not to be disregarded; as in the supplies of water and light, just alluded to, regulations are not to be scouted which are required to purify the water and improve the light, and, withal, to prevent and provide against the casualties of inundation and explosion.

To come to our subject. Our argument may be conducted upon two principles;—the one is the economical principle; the other by appeal to scriptural authority. In the one case the question is treated in its bearings upon the temporal interests of individuals and communities; in the other, we view the subject in the lights of morality and religion, and in connexion with the duties and interests of our holy Christianity. In this series of

treatises, the former of these principles has not by any means been overlooked; but the latter principle of argument is regarded as first, and chief, and last —the main principle according to which the question is to be discussed and settled in the Christian community. At the same time, it is our firm persuasion that the subject of the Sabbatical institute, soundly expounded on the high principle of scriptural authority, will bring out the argument on the principle of sound economics, and establish satisfactorily that the observation of the Sabbath conduces in a very high degree to the temporal well-being of man, individually and socially. We regard it as an axiom not requiring proof, and not to be questioned, that the law which God has enacted for man, the whole moral law, while declaring the Divine supremacy, and as such demanding obedience, is calculated to promote the greatest good. We do not, we dare not, lay utility, expediency, or self-interest at the foundation of moral obligation. "True indeed it is, that conformity to the approving will of God is conducive to individual happiness and the general good, and must produce the highest degree of both. This is, therefore, a sound accessory reason of moral obligation: our objection lies against raising it into the primary reason." We shall, however, leave the economical utility to show itself, while we deal with the argument on the high principle of the revealed will of God. We are fully aware, that to give our argument conclusiveness, so far as founded on the Fourth Commandment, it is necessary to establish its abiding moral obligation. "The requirements of the moral law," it is justly regarded, "are not the dictates of the mere or sovereign will of God, but are the results of the real nature of things and the propriety of relations, and so of immutable obligation. The appointment of a specified time for the celebration of worship is partly positive, but not positive as the ceremonial law. It is founded on the constitution of things as ordained

by God, and on the Divine procedure in creation; and it is wise and good, while the present system of the world and constitution of man continue. The antiquity of the Sabbath, as instituted before the entrance of sin—the occasion and reference of its first institution, in God's creating the heavens and the earth in six days, and his resting on the seventh—the position which it holds in the midst of unrepealed moral statutes—its benevolent design, as providing a season of rest from labour—its recognition in the history and predictions of the Old Testament, and in the doctrine and practice of Christ and His Apostles, and the history of the Christian Church—supply material for satisfactory argumentation on the subject. These and other arguments have been elaborated in former treatises, and we do not feel ourselves called to reiterate what has been already written. We now assume the moral obligation of the fourth commandment, and deal with persons acknowledging it.

God has spoken, and he has written, and caused it to be "written in a table and noted in a book for the time to come"—"REMEMBER THE SABBATH-DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY; SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR AND DO ALL THY WORK; BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD; IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK."

We revere this as the law of God, obligatory wherever it is made known—a law obvious to the most feeble capacity; authoritative and majestic to command the attention of the most heedless; impartial and comprehensive, embracing the whole circle of superiors, inferiors, and equals; withal, at the same time, so benevolent, as to be regarded not merely as the utterance of absolute moral sovereignty, but as a grant of Divine goodness, to be received and highly appreciated. They judge falsely as presumptuously, who place their own will and pleasure in opposition to the authority, and wisdom, and goodness of God. Great as are the advantages of the postal establishment, it is under law to

society and to God. It is under law to society, and cannot, must not, under any pretext, infringe upon the liberties of men, trifle with their lives, or inflict cruelties upon the mute creation. In the hands of moral and accountable beings, it is under law to God, and men cannot, in conducting it, violate innocently and with impunity the wise, benevolent, and authoritative legislation of the most high God. We are constrained to regard Sabbath mails, in the ordinary circumstances of society, as a violation of the letter, the spirit, and the design of the Divine law; and because "sin is the transgression of the law," we must speak of the SIN of Sabbath mails. According to every just interpretation of the fourth commandment, civil labour, not required by necessity or mercy, or the observance of religious ordinances, is interdiction on the holy Sabbath. "Thou shalt not do any work." But the systematic and regular running of the mail is ordinary civil labour, and, when not specially required as above, is a violation of the law of God. The carrying of mails by man on foot or on horseback, by gig or coach, boat, steamer, or locomotive, is ordinary civil work, required and lawful on six days of the week, but forbidden, and therefore unlawful, on the Sabbath. By the persons employed in the various services of the Post-office on the Lord's-day, there is an appropriation of time in direct contravention of the law of God. Thus occupied, they are performing their every-day secular work by which they provide for themselves and their families. Attendance in the place of civil business, receiving letters and mails, sorting and stamping letters, sealing bags, despatching mails, and delivering letters, newspapers, and small packages of various character, form the ordinary work of the post-office; and in many cases the work is onorous and exhausting. The work done within the post-office, the work of the persons carrying letters and packages, or conveying them by coach or train, is not distinguishable by the persons engaged or by others, from the

work of the other days of the week. God has said of the Sabbath, "On it thou shalt not do any work;" and in the things of which we complain, the authority and goodness of God, thus interposed, are resisted and set at nought. The lightnings, it is true, do not flash in our eyes, as in the eyes of ancient Israel; the thunders are not reverberating from the trembling mountain; the voice is not giving forth the audible utterances which made those who heard it entreat that it should not be spoken to them any more; yet the commandment stands on the sacred page unrevoked by the authority by which it was enacted, and by which alone it can be repealed, and is recognised by prophets and apostles, and by him who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil and establish them—the Lord of all, and the "Lord also of the Sabbath." The civil labour in the matter in question is in disobedience to the authority of God; it is breaking down the reverential acknowledgment of the Deity which the rest of the Sabbath is expressly designed and admirably fitted to cherish and maintain, and treating that honour which is due to God, and required by Him, with neglect and contempt. Is there obligation in the commandments, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not steal," and the other precepts of the Decalogue, and none in the precept addressed, with so marked specifications, to the parent, to the child, to the master, to the servant, and to Him that sits in the gates to administer righteousness? Is no heed whatever to be given to the Divine caveat which introduces this commandment—"Remember the Sabbath-day?" Is no deference to be paid to the Divine wisdom, in distributing the time of labour and of rest? Is no grateful return to be made to the Divine benevolence, in granting us six days for our own work; nor reverential obedience to be yielded to the Divine supremacy, in challenging a special propriety in the seventh portion of time? Is there to be no sense nor acknowledgment of the Divine

mercy, in instituting a day of rest from labour and toil to man and to cattle, and giving opportunity to man of moral and spiritual improvement? Is the Divine benediction, which was conjoined with the keeping of the Sabbath when God first consecrated it to His special service, to be treated as a thing of nought? Is there no fear of the blight or moth of the curse on the work of the six days, in treating with neglect the day which He who blesses and it shall be blessed, has specially blessed and hallowed? Is there obligation in the commandments of the second table, in which God has set the fence of His high authority around our honour, life, substance, and character, and no obligation in the precept in which God has appointed a season for the special acknowledgment of His being, the celebration of His worship, and the hallowing of His name; and in which, while consulting His own glory, He has at the same time regarded the true interest of man, ordaining that this portion of time shall be a season of relief to the body from laborious toil, and escape to the mind from engrossing secular care? We are, of course, addressing ourselves particularly to persons acknowledging the obligation of the fourth commandment, and find it utterly impossible to reconcile the practice condemned with such acknowledgment.

The claims and urgencies of business are brought forward in defence of Sabbath mails. In a manufacturing and commercial country like ours, speedy and regular communications involve deeply the interests of the several classes of the community; and diligence in business is commended by the obligations of virtue and of religion. But let us hear the Divine commandment, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do ALL thy work. On the Seventh thou shalt not do ANY work." The hebdomadal rest from civil labour is the law of God, and, wherever this exceeding broad commandment finds man, it demands respect and obedience. It addresses itself with equal authority to the parent and the child, the master

and servant, the husbandman, the artisan, the merchant, the rich man and the poor man, the monarch and the subject, the legislator, the judge, the magistrate, and the community at large. This law is obligatory in the city and in the field, in the house and on the highway, in the factory, in the counting-house, and in the shop, on the land and on the water, on shipboard at sea and in the harbour. Rest on the Sabbath is the LAW of God, and in no ordinary state of things is it to be set aside. The very supposition lays the wisdom of God under imputation. To the man who works with his hands, or otherwise pursues civil business, the weekly rest is matter of duty, right, and mercy; and there must lurk some fallacy or evil principle when, in prosecuting the ordinary business of life, a plea of necessity is urged in opposition to the law of God. Two facts may be adduced in opposition to this plea, the one of long standing, the other of recent date. The city of London has no mail on the Sabbath. With what plausibility or propriety can provincial towns and rural districts set up the plea of business for Sabbath mails, when the General Post-office of the commercial metropolis of the wide world issues no letters, and employs no servants on the Lord's-day? Is it not matter of fact, that when proposals have been made for opening the General Post-office on the Sabbath, remonstrances have poured in against it from all quarters? As in other cases, so in this, let the Divine command, "On the seventh day thou shalt rest," take effect over all the land. From midnight to midnight let the Sabbath be a season of rest to man and beast employed in this as in every other ordinary work. There is neither impossibility nor impracticability here; and the importance of the thing demands effort and sacrifice to carry it into effect. Were this arrangement gone into universally, there would of course be no blank day (as merchants have been accustomed to call the day when no mails arrived from London), with the

exception of the Sabbath; and this, though a day of cessation from toil and trade, not a blank day, but a business day of incalculable profits to those who rightly improve it. The Sabbath would not be a blank day even to the men of corporeal labour and commercial occupation; for mind and body would by rest be prepared for more vigorous and correct application to business, and work and business would be done better and in greater amount than could be compassed by continuous application. The rest of the Sabbath will not prove lost time to the man of business and work, any more than the time employed in oiling the wheels of a carriage to give it both a sweeter and a swifter motion. This gone into, a public homage would be done to religion over the land; thousands would be released from oppressive drudgery; and the men of business would be relieved from close application, without the fear of being anticipated or overreached, as is done or dreaded, in the eager competitions of mercantile life. But could there be a plea for Sabbath mails on the score of business—a plea that we deem inadmissible—it would be altogether set aside by the recent improvements in locomotion. What! mails from London every day excepting the Sabbath! twice every day, and oftener in many cases, and yet cry for business letters on Sabbath! There must be something altogether undue and excessive here. Why not urge the same plea for other public establishments? Banks are closed on the Sabbath. Courts of law are shut on the first day of the week. Other business and Government offices are shut on the Lord's-day. Might not the plea of business be urged for opening the Exchange for commercial transactions, and warehouses and shops for sales, as in France and other countries on the Continent? Why does the judge not hold his court, and admit the lawyer to plead the cause of his client on the Sabbath? Why are the Houses of Parliament not opened on the Sabbath? We can easily conceive of cases involving

deeply the temporal interests of parties, their personal convenience, and even their liberty, in which urgency might be pleaded with greater plausibility for opening the courts of law, than for the ordinary despatch of mails on the Sabbath. Why should the distinction of lawful days be kept up in the several departments of legislative, judicial, and civil business, and broken down in the Post-office?

It is alleged in defence of Sabbath mails, that they do not demand the whole time of the Sabbath, opportunity being given to the servants for attendance upon public worship. This is so far, apparently at least, if it be not constrained, a concession to the Sabbath cause; but it will not stand the test of sound principle, practicability, or facts. It is wrong in principle. It implies an unjustifiable infringement upon sacred time; and the principle requiring the concession of a portion of the day demands the whole. Considered practically, it is incompatible with the due and profitable observance of the Sabbath. Attendance at the place of business, occupation in the morning, or at intervals, with civil duties, and these not unfrequently of a chafing description, break in upon the quiet and sacredness of the day, interfere with the personal retirement, domestic duties, regular attendance on public worship, and subsequent reflection, which make the Sabbath a season of profit and hallowed delight to those entering into the spirit of its santification. Nor will this plea stand the light of facts. It is certain that the services connected with the Post-office and the mails interfere with composed and regular attendance on religious worship, and that this is felt to lie heavily oppressive on the spirits of individuals, tempted by the necessities of their circumstances to enter into engagements, and perform services, in opposition to the dictates of their consciences and their best feelings. All this must operate with a very injurious influence. Partial absence from public worship, and familiarity with civil employment on

the Sabbath, tend greatly to diminish conscientious impressions, induce callousness of moral and religious feeling: and, working insensibly and gradually, may issue in settled indifference to religion altogether. It is to no purpose to allege, that many persons do not avail themselves of the partial opportunity of attending religious ordinances, but betake to excursions of pleasure, and mingle in scenes of frivolity and immorality. In this case, the blame is so far with the parties themselves; but it is not so altogether: and it merits grave consideration, how far, in such cases, the result is to be ascribed to the insinuating influence upon the mind and heart of civil employment on the Sabbath, and partial absence from religious ordinances; the evil of the Sabbath mail being thus the occasion and cause of the alleged profanations.

But does not the law of the Sabbath admit of work in cases of necessity and mercy? It is at once conceded, but not that the mail in ordinary circumstances is such a work. Let the Lord of the Sabbath be the expositor of its obligation, and let the examples which he has adduced be exponents of works of necessity and mercy. When expounding the Sabbatic law, and vindicating it from the traditions and extreme expositions of the Pharisees, he gave no sanction to the performance of ordinary civil labour on the Sabbath. The manual labour required of the priests in the sacrificial services, his own healing of the sick, the disciples plucking the ears of corn when they were hungry, the taking of an ox or ass to the water, and the lifting of a sheep that had fallen into a pit, are the things adduced by Him as works lawful to be done on the Sabbath. None of these are works of ordinary civil labour, but works connected with the appointed services of religious worship, or works of mercy to ourselves or fellow-creatures, or works of humanity to the animal creation—works that cannot be anticipated on the previous day, nor postponed to the following. He vindicates His disciples in plucking the ears of corn, from the example of David and from a scriptural

principle; but He does not command them to take the sickle and reap the harvest. He authorises that the ox or ass is to be led out to water, but does not command that it be put into the yoke, and employed in ordinary labour. Nothing more is required to show the utter irrelevancy of calling up the Saviour's doctrine in the advocacy of Sabbath mails than to say, that the carrying of mails on the Lord's-day is not an act of worship to God prescribed in His Word and required on that day, nor is it an act of necessity to ourselves in the preservation of life, nor an act of mercy to our fellow-creatures, nor an act of humanity to the animal race. In all these cases man and beast may be lawfully employed on the Sabbath, and we must beware, in condemning the profanation of the Sabbath, not to weaken the argument by running into the extravagant views of the Pharisees. So far are the Saviour's expositions of the Sabbath from giving countenance to Sabbath mails, it is obvious they supply most powerful argument against them, inasmuch as the Sabbath requires acts of worship to God, and merciful rest to ourselves, and works of compassion to fellow-creatures, of which Sabbath mails prevent to many the opportunity; and it requires humanity to the beast of burden, which Sabbath mails in many cases deny. The Sabbath mail is, in ordinary circumstances, common civil labour—labour immediately and chiefly subservient to secular objects, and so receives no sanction from Christ's exposition of the Sabbath.

The occurrence of sickness and death, requiring the immediate attendance of friends, is adduced in justification of Sabbath mails; and from the readiness and frequency with which cases of this kind are urged, one would be led to conceive that they usually occur on the Sabbath. We say nothing to quench the sympathies of nature, or to treat lightly the calls of Christian duty. It may be well, however, to remind masters and servants of the duty of providing for visits of sympathy and mercy on the other days of the week. Is nothing to be said of the cupidity

of masters denying their servants, and the cupidity or other evil of servants denying themselves such opportunities? When the necessities alleged occur on the Sabbath, the highway is open, and conveyances accessible in cases clearly requiring the use of them. Such cases must be dealt with as specialities, and provided for accordingly. Though mails were to run at every hour of the day, and of the night also, it would be impossible to meet every emergency; nor will occasional disappointment, from the want of a Sabbath mail, however trying to feeling, warrant the sacrifice and the wrong which would be inflicted, by involving thousands of persons in an open breach of the law of God fifty-two days in the year to meet a contingency. We can easily conceive of cases of public and private interest in which the conveyance of the mail on the Lord's-day would be amply justified, but justified in the special circumstances of the case, and only when these circumstances continue. In the days of Esther, when the Jews where called to defend themselves from a bloody plot, posts were despatched "on horseback, and riders, on mules, and camels, and young dromedaries;" and in such a case, though the Jews were forbidden to journey on the Sabbath, the despatch of couriers, in the extraordinary circumstances, would have been lawful. In these eventful days, when the wheels of providence revolve with so grand and accelerated movement, we know not what necessity may occur requiring mails at their utmost speed, nor how intimately our duty and our safety may be connected with speedily-communicated intelligence. These circumstances will speak for themselves, and they form exceptions from the general rule.

Nor will it avail to plead in behalf of Sabbath mails upon the principle of liberty. Upon the principle of sound economics, it will not be questioned that it is competent to society to enact laws regulating the hours of civil labour, and to protect the dependent classes of the community from the exor-

bitant demands of cupidity or competition, by providing for regular cessation from work and the requisite repose of the night; and upon the same principle to protect the periodical return of a day of rest. Whatever individuals may do for themselves, they cannot claim a right, upon their own private view and pleasure, to oppose the united wisdom and benevolence of society, and to compel others to labour for their interest or pleasure, either constraining them by oppressive exaction, or tempting them by special remuneration, to violate authoritative enactments, founded on equity, humanity, and liberty. In every well-ordered social state, individual view and right must, in some degree, be conceded to the public good, in which all are made equally to participate; society having rights and liberty to be respected and maintained as well as individuals. We applaud diligence in business, we respond to the calls of necessity and mercy, we respect the sympathies of relationship and of friendship, we revere liberty; but we cannot urge any or all of these in vindication of a systematic infraction on the rest of the holy Sabbath by regular mails. Has man more wisdom than God, who has distributed time for labour and rest? has he more equity and mercy than God, who has said, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but on the seventh day thou shalt not do any work?" There is reason to apprehend, that there prevail great ignorance and misapprehension of the nature and design of the Sabbath; and that in many cases, under the specious pretexts of diligence, necessity, mercy, and liberty, there lurk principles of less excellent name—covetousness, love of superiority, if not a spirit of ungodliness, in hostility to the sacred restraints of religion, and aversion to its holy duties.

Constrained to regard the employment of men in the conveyance of mails, in ordinary circumstances, as a transgression of the law of God, a sin, an immorality, disobedience to the authority of God, let us direct our attention to some of its numerous evils.

Sabbath mails deprive the persons employed of a respite from civil labour, to which their Maker has given them a title, and of which no man has a right to denude them. It is thus an infliction of wrong, a constructive invasion of a liberty which Divine benevolence has bestowed, and protected by a law. Voluntary engagement, or the unconsciousness of wrong on the part of many or most of the persons concerned, does not extenuate the sin. Not to dwell on higher considerations, it is impossible to tell to what extent excessive and exhausting labour has depredated upon the lives of individuals, by depriving them of the rest required to recruit the animal frame.

Sabbath mails deprive great numbers of the means of intellectual and moral improvement which the Lord's-day supplies. By infringing on the weekly rest, individuals are unfitted for sacred duties where there may be partial opportunity of waiting on them, while others are entirely deprived. Although persons are not compelled nor impressed into the service of the Post-office, a temptation is presented, it works gradually, freedom is used with sacred time; and the result is, in many cases, settled indifference to all religion. It is altogether vain to think of promoting by physical force the religious observation of the Sabbath; yet all should have the opportunity, and none should directly, or even constructively, be compelled to its open profanation.

The Sabbath mail deprives the public of the services of many persons, who are deserving objects of their confidence and complacency. There are not a few who cannot engage in the services of the mail, because of its violation of the Sabbath—persons of sobriety, integrity, and activity, whose services on the six days of the week would be eminently useful. Yes, those who feel the obligation to keep the Sabbath, are not hypocrites and weaklings, as is often ignorantly and gratuitously alleged. There are many persons of muscular strength, mental ingenuity, prompt activity, and kind and obliging manners,

who cannot make engagements which involve their consciences in a violation of the law of God. This holds true in a large extent where the mail is conveyed by railway. It demands serious consideration, whether there be not, in the case of the persons alluded to, a twofold invasion of right—their civil right to compete for employment for which they are qualified, and their Christian liberty when esteeming it their duty to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.

Sabbath mails supply largely the means of Sabbath desecration. The eager merchant has thus an opportunity of receiving and answering letters of business; the men of law and their clients, if disposed, are supplied with their papers; the worldly politician has his journals; the man of pleasure his assignations; parlours and reading-rooms of every description are supplied with their newspapers. It is impossible to tell the multifarious matters served out on the Sabbath from the letter-bag, or to estimate the extent in which the Post-office contributes to employments adverse to the sanctification of the day of God. True, the individuals referred to cannot be forced to the performance of religious duties, and may contrive to find employment congenial to their dispositions. Still the Sabbath mails contribute directly and extensively to Sabbath profanation, and persons supporting and abetting them participate in the guilt.

Sabbath mails obtrude over the length and breadth of the land, spectacles that are offensive to a great part of the community. The running of horses, carriages, and trains, the blowing of whistles and horns, the bustle at post-offices, the delivery of letters and papers, the movements of runners carrying letters and parcels, and the multitudes of porters and carriages in attendance and in motion, break in upon the sacred stillness and quiet of the holy Sabbath. Is nothing due to the feelings of a great part of the Christian community in this matter? Is nothing due to Christian men of character and influence, and to the ministers of religion, who, while they are sup-

porting all the interests of society and of the country, feel themselves called upon to plead for the sanctity and the utility of the Christian Sabbath? We might almost make our appeal here to courteousness and good feeling, and inquire whether, in the terms and tone in which this subject is sometimes treated in some quarters, there be not a violation of the ordinary proprieties and amenities of respectable society. Scoffing and ridicule are neither argument nor politeness.

We cannot omit to notice here the demoralising tendency of Sabbath mails. Besides the influence which they exert upon the individuals employed, the open disrespect of the law of God, and the neglect and disregard of the duties of religion, tend to diminish in others who witness them, that reverence of the Deity, that sense of accountability to God, and fear of Divine displeasure, which operate in many cases with a stronger influence than even legal penalties. Men are ready to become seared in conscience, and reckless in conduct, when they witness the open habitual violation of religious obligations; and this, too, under the authority of law, and in the face of the earnest remonstrances of a large portion of the community. The neglect and profanation of the Sabbath, it has often been confessed, have been initiatory to the state of feeling, and to those courses of conduct which have issued in crime and ruin. But in cases not of flagrant crime, the Sabbath mail has contributed to relax the sense of moral and religious obligation. How can it be otherwise, when a law, so much appreciated by a large part of the community, is habitually slighted? And what a baleful influence must it exert upon youth, servants, and dependants, to witness the constant violation of the Sabbath in this respect? Should the head of a family send a child or a servant to the post-office for letters and newspapers; or should he himself call, and it may happen, on his way to, or in his return from the house of God; or should professional gentlemen burden their apprentices and servants with

the duty of calling for or posting letters on the Sabbath, the sense of the obligation of the Sabbath must be diminished, and views formed of Christian character far below the proper standard. Even the interest of the Post-office itself, and of the public, are deeply implicated here. Money, to a large amount, is transmitted through the post, and in spite of the utmost vigilance great sums are abstracted; and it becomes a matter of grave inquiry, how far the plunder of money-letters may be traced to familiarity with the desecration of the Sabbath. The efficiency of the Post-office establishment is involved here. But, independently of this, the wide-spread example of the Sabbath mail must exert so far an influence upon the multitudes that devote themselves to idleness and folly on the Lord's-day, sealing them up against the occasional rebukes of their own consciences, and counteracting the word of kind and faithful admonition which may sometimes be addressed to them. It is no doubtful consideration, that the profanation of the Sabbath, besides originating crime, cherishes, in no small degree, the indolence, intemperance, sensuality, and insubordination, which prey so deeply on the very vitals of society. And to all this the Sabbath mails lend their aid.

Believing in the doctrine of a Providence, and in the moral character of that Providence, and in the connexion between national sin and punishment, we deprecate the Sabbath mails on the score of national judgment. The Providence of God is not a mere mechanical rotation, like the stellar movements, nor a mere natural succession, as in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but a moral administration, indicating the favour or displeasure of a moral Governor. National sins, in the moral working of their proper effects, and in the course of a moral administration, bring national suffering; and, when not repented of and forsaken, they bring national ruin and extinction. With the world's history before our eyes, and the Bible in our hands, we must urge this consideration.

The Sabbath stood high among the privileges of the Jews, and its profanation has a specification and a reiteration in the indictment of their sins, and stands connected with their awful judgments. (Jer. xvii. 21, 22; Ezek. xx. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24; Hosea ii. 11; &c.) Though the peculiarities of the Jewish polity have now passed away, there is a residuum of moral instruction and admonition in such passages of Scripture which it would be equally foolish and criminal to overlook. While the recorded judgments happened unto the Jews for ensamples, they are written in the Word of God and in the historic page for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come. Let us not be high-minded, but fear. Our Sabbaths have been profaned by business and by pleasure, and to these the Sabbath mails have largely contributed. Oh, for some noble-minded and disinterested Nehemiah, braced with moral courage, to speak to nobles, to rulers, and to bearers of burdens, to merchants and sellers of all kinds of ware; and wise in counsel to devise, and resolute in purpose to prosecute, legitimate measures of reformation! "What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not our fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us and our city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath."

It may be well, before closing this part of our argument, to advert to the extent of the sin and evils of Sabbath mails. The moral character of an act, or course of action, is the same, whether viewed in a single instance or in a multitude of instances; but in the latter case, the offence against God, and the danger to society, affect more strongly the obligation to endeavour after the removal and subsequent prevention of the evil; as the wide-spreading prevalence of a malignant disease, more than a single insulated occurrence, affects the duty of society to employ means of removal and prevention. There is reason to apprehend that the evil complained of is seldom

contemplated in its wide-spread extent. Reflect on the fact. Cast your eye over the map of the British isles, and look northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, and how few are the spots where the sin of which we speak is not enacted fifty-two Sabbaths in the year! Think on the number of offices, and the attendance required in many of them; the letters and packages sent to be forwarded; the mails received; the sorting, stamping of letters, sealing of bags, and other services connected with the forwarding of mails; the delivery of letters called for or sent out to be delivered by runners; then think on the numbers of children, servants, apprentices, news-room keepers, and others calling at the offices. Then take into account the conveyance of the mail, the stable-boys, ostlers, coachmen, and guards, and horses, that are employed; the attendance of porters and waiters at the different stages; the number of persons employed in conducting the mail trains, and the servants, porters, and coachmen, in attendance at the termini and the intermediate stations. And after all this, call up into your thought the multitude of individuals supplied in their houses, hotels, and reading-rooms, and the occupations that follow. The amount is appalling. Even of persons directly and immediately employed about the post-offices, the number is great. In Edinburgh upwards of a hundred persons are on duty in the Post-office on the Lord's-day, and letters and newspapers are called for in thousands. In Glasgow upwards of fifty are known to be similarly employed. Extend the calculation to populous and busy England, where the Sabbath has not been held so sacred. In the city of London, though the General Post-office be shut, several hundreds of persons are employed on the Lords-day in the London District and Mail Coach offices. In Liverpool and Manchester upwards of a hundred are regularly employed on the Sabbath; and in the other large business places in proportion. Transfer the calcu-

lation to Ireland. In the General Post-office of Dublin alone, upwards of a hundred are employed on the Sabbath. Direct your calculation to the wide extent of the British colonies, whither the evil takes its range. Upon the whole, reflect upon the persons employed in serving the mail, conducting the business of the offices, conveying it, and employed in consequence of its supplies, and the amount will be told, not in hundreds, nor in thousands, nor tens of thousands, nor in hundreds of thousands, but in thousands of thousands manifold. If there be sin and evils in the Sabbath mails, they are numerous and wide-spread on an alarming scale; and to all regarding the subject in the light in which we are constrained to view it, there is a loud and solemn call for faithful remonstrance, earnest appeal, and enlightened and persevering effort.

If we have succeeded in establishing the sin and evils of Sabbath mails, two inquiries arise:—At whose door do this sin and these evils lie? and, By what means shall they be removed? The sin, of course, must lie at the door of the Legislature, or company originating and authorising these mails—at the door of those who conduct them, and of those who avail themselves of them without any call of necessity or mercy—at the door, also, of those who abet and vindicate them, and of those who, acknowledging the evil, sit still in apathy and indifference, without protestation against it, or effort to have it removed. And what is to be done, or what can be done? It is not enough to grieve in secret, and satisfy ourselves with expressions of deep regret to Christian friends, or to make an occasional reference to it in prayer to God, or even to write a tract or a book. It is our duty to give a distinct and emphatic testimony against the sin—to keep ourselves clear, to the utmost of our power, from all participation in the sin and evils—to employ our influence, as parents, masters, ministers, rulers, as well as private individuals—to instruct and impress others in our respec-

tive spheres—to remonstrate with influential individuals as we have access—to address ourselves respectively, argumentatively, and firmly, to companies—and, so far as the sin has the sanction of Government, to petition and memorialise—to co-operate in all sound measures—and that we prosecute these measures unwearicdly, not yielding to discouragement from opposition, or from the scoff or from cold-breathing apathy—and to do all this in the spirit of humble and prayerful dependence upon God, who has the hearts of all men and all influences in His hand, and as the rivers of water turneth them whithersoever he will.

Under these views, we now address ourselves to the sound economist, the patriot, the philanthropist, and the Christian. We make an appeal in behalf of the servants connected with the postal establishment. These servants are thousands in number, and, with the exception of a partial release during the hours of public worship, and the exemption lately granted them from money-order transactions, they drudge in the routine of the duties of the other days of the week. In their case there is a regular systematic encroachment upon the rest of the seventh portion of time—a rest allowed to other public servants—a rest necessary to the physical wellbeing of man, according to the soundest medical science;—a rest, too, acknowledged in the law of the land, as well as granted in the benevolence of God. In their behalf, therefore, we make an appeal to *justice* against a wrong inflicted upon them in the deprivation of a well-founded right which others enjoy. And we make our appeal to *mercy*. Is it not a drawback upon the pleasure of a generous and benevolent mind, that persons should be drudging in exhausting labours on a day of rest to all others? They know it, and feel it, and it is undeniable that to them release would be a boon of great value. Irrespectively of the Divine interposition, it can be shown that a periodical respite from labour is requisite for the well-

being of the physical system; and the wisdom and goodness of God in appointing a portion of time for this may be fully vindicated. In view of the presumptuous proposal in France to reduce it from a seventh to a tenth, well may the labouring man say, "Let me fall now into the hands of the Lord, for His mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hands of man." And shall no pity be shown to wives and children who are deprived, by Sabbath occupation, of the society of husbands and parents, and of the advantage and pleasure of leisurely domestic intercourse, to unite them more closely in the bonds of virtuous affection? We urge our appeal also on the score of *liberty*—yes, civil and religious liberty—civil liberty to enjoy exemption from labour on the Sabbath, a liberty to which the parties concerned have a right by the laws of God and man; and religious liberty—liberty to appropriate time for worshipping God in private and in public. We are not speaking, because not thinking, of forcing men to the performance of religious duties, or compelling attendance on religious ordinances, but we are pleading for liberty to those who deem it their duty to worship God in a season generally appropriated to it; and we protest against the invasion of religious liberty by deprivation, by legislation, and by a virtual compulsion of multitudes to do what is wrong; and those, too, in many cases, in the first instance at least, contrary to their religious conviction. And we urge our plea on the score of public *morals*, persuaded from the nature of the case, and assured by observation and satisfactory information, that the Sabbath mail operates with a baneful influence on the virtue and morals of society, by diminishing respect for the Sabbath, and breaking in upon attendance on religious ordinances. Is it not a matter of fact that those districts where the first day of the week is kept sacred, are distinguished by a less amount of crime, and by peace and good order? We ask the patriot, the economist, and the philanthropist,

whether our appeal to justice, to mercy, to liberty, and to morality, be not well founded, or can be anything on our part than disinterested? We beg to ask, in a country where mails are delivered six days of the week, What privation would be inflicted—what injury would be done to business, to politics, to science, to any interest whatever of individual or society—by a discontinuance of Sabbath mails? We deprecate opposition, if their can be such, on the mere principle of not making a concession to the professors of religion.

We beg also to remind our readers of some important connexions in which this particular aspect of the Sabbath question stands. You cannot fail to observe that it is placed in very close connexion with the still-agitated question of Sabbath trains, the alleged necessity of the case, and the apparent reservations made for it in the Acts of Parliament, and the fact of many railway trains being already employed on the Sabbath, being adduced in all adverse pleadings. When we reflect on the flood of immorality and ungodliness which Sabbath railway trains are diffusing over society in the places where they run, on the threatened extension of this evil, and this, too, by legislation, and on the certain results of the greater extension, it is of importance to anticipate and preclude any advantage that may be taken from the Sabbath mail in subsequent argumentation. Besides, it is not to be overlooked that the question of Sabbath mails is exciting interest in different parts of England as well as Scotland, at present, and that the opportunity should not be lost, when, in influential quarters, there is manifested a disposition to seek and to grant the desired reformation. Unanimous, extensive, and persevering application is required at the present time, and is not without some prospect of success. But there is not a day to be lost. The agitation of the question in America, the able and well-founded pleadings on the subject from the press, and the practical effect which

these pleadings are producing in the restraint of Sabbath profanation, particularly in the matter of Sabbath travelling, demand the approbation, sympathy, and co-operation of the mother country. Besides, the discontinuance of Sabbath mails might exert an influence in aiding suppression of other abuses that presently obtain, and in the prevention of others to which there is manifested a growing tendency. It is believed that in certain departments of commercial and legal business, in the printing of newspapers, in different departments of the arts, and great public works, infractions are made on the Sabbath which are altogether unjustifiable; and that they, too, are operating with a demoralising influence on the persons implicated. The petitions presented lately to the Legislature, to protect tradesmen and shopkeepers in England from opening their places of business on the Lord's-day, show strongly the evil tendency of the present time, from the eager pursuit of business and competition of those engaged in it, and give additional urgency to our appeal against the Sabbath mail, which ministers so largely to those evils. Its discontinuance might be the means of suppressing some existing evils, and preventing other profanations.

Our appeal addresses itself to Christians as members of the Church, and interested in her spiritual good. The eager pursuit of business, the love of money, and the "pride of life," are making inroads upon the spirituality and devotion of the members of the Church, occupying time, engrossing conversation, secularising the spirit, and greatly unfitting for the profits and pleasures of the holy Sabbath. Many, it is confidently hoped, maintain a conscientious and strict separation from commercial business, and from all connexion with Sabbath mails on the Lord's-day. But there is reason to fear that in other cases the temptation is too strong, and that, covertly or more openly, occasionally or statedly, encroachments are made on the Sabbath; and that,

in this case, much injury is done to spirituality of character, while an unfavourable influence is put forth on children, domestics, and servants, even though the evil be kept, in some measure, from the public eye. Concern for the revived and invigorated spirituality of the Church of God, calls us to earnest efforts to have the insinuating temptations of Sabbath mails taken out of the way.

In conclusion, we urge our argument by regard to our national peace and prosperity. We reckon it neither superstitious nor fanatical to refer to the moral indications of Providence in our recent commercial distresses and other sufferings, and to the present commotions of Europe. We have referred above to the moral character of Providence, and feel ourselves called loudly, at the present time, to "learn righteousness." It may be justly inquired, whether our profanation of the Sabbath by secular business, by civil recreations, and abounding immoralities connected with them, does not stand connected with our late suffering in the manufacturing, and commercial, and monetary departments, involving capitalists, merchants, and men of property and wealth in embarrassment, and followed with the destitution and moral degradation of a great part of the population. Cast your eye on the historic page, and let the desolation of maritime and wealthy Tyre, and the howling ships of Tarshish, admonish of sin and danger. Was there not a cause? Yes. Tyre's merchandise and hire were not "holiness unto the Lord." Call up unto remembrance the desolation of ancient Jerusalem, read in history the exact fulfilment of the prophetic word, and inquire into the cause;—not the grasping power of haughty Babylon, but the holy displeasure of Him who places high and chief in the indictment of Jerusalem's crimes, THEY POLLUTED MY SABBATHS. (Jer. xx. 12-24.) Look abroad to Paris and to the Continent, where the Lord's-day is habitually devoted to secular business and pleasure, and often selected as if for

marked desecration and contempt, for every great public demonstration and festivity, and inquire whether this one prevailing sin does not stand in connexion, morally and judiciously, with the immorality, ungodliness, infidelity, atheism, confusions, murders, which have been working of late with so appalling effect? And, in the light of the prophetic page, cast your eye forward to the near-coming future, when, in the judgment to come in one hour on the mystic Babylon, "the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn; for no man buyeth of their merchandise any more: and every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, shall stand afar off, and cry, and weep, and wail." (Rev. xviii, 11, 17.) Then, as in the days of old, "one post shall rise to meet another, to show that the city is fallen" (Jer. li. 31); and carry the tidings to the ends of the earth. Alas for that devoted pursuit of merchandise, and gain, and misappropriation of wealth, to which the Sabbath mail has so extensively ministered! Let us hear the voice of warning. If our land is to be saved amid the present and coming wrecks of nations, and our swift electric telegraphs not charged to tell our own fall in the anti-Christian ruin, it must be by some specially-redeeming consideration. And what is this? Not wealth, not arts and sciences, not political freedom in its most unexceptionable form, not the most enlightened economic legislation, not the most penetrating acumen of far-seeing statesmen, not armies and navies, nor the prowess of soldiers and sailors, can save our land. Our disease is a moral one, inward, deep, wide-spread; and the remedy must correspond to it. "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity." "At what instant I speak concerning a nation, to pluck, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation against which I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent

of the evil I thought to do unto them." "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach (ruin) to any people." The holy Sabbath unites in it the interests of God and man, of individuals, and communities; it binds together the whole moral law; and from its very nature, and from the history of its working, is the best defence of religion and morality, the grand conservatory of universal righteousness. While it proves to the Christian a season of great spiritual good, and an earnest of everlasting rest, the practical respect of it brings with it a temporal blessing, as its violation exposes, in this respect, to a curse. It sets before us, in the sacred Scriptures and in the pages of history, "the blessing and the curse."

Encouraged by the one and awed by the other, let us turn our foot away from every profanation of the Sabbath, and in the discontinuance of Sabbath mails, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD shall be inscribed on the bells of our horses, on the front of our mighty locomotives, and on the prows of our gallant steamers; and by an abandonment of the evils connected with Sabbath mails, and other congenial profanations, our people shall be "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD," and our merchandise and our hire shall also be "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD."

"If thou shalt turn thy foot from doing thy pleasure ON MY HOLY DAY; and call the SABBATH a delight, THE HOLY OF THE LORD, HONOURABLE; and shalt honour him, NOT DOING THINE OWN WAYS, NOR FINDING THINE OWN PLEASURES, NOR SPEAKING THINE OWN WORDS: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." "But if ye will not hearken unto me to HALLOW THE SABBATH-DAY, and NOT TO BEAR A BURDEN, EVEN ENTERING IN AT THE GATES OF JERUSALEM; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." (Isa. lviii. 13, 14; Jer. xvii. 27.)

XIII.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY RICHARD WINTER HAMILTON, LL.D., D.D.*

THE Law of the Sabbath—through all times and dispensations, identical in principle and invariable in force—is the proper *statute of religion*. It would be difficult to find another, certainly any so direct. Only man could be thus addressed. Thus addressed, he is marked out for the duty of piety and worship. Given to the new-made Adam, it expounded his nature, unfolded his capacity, and publicly stamped him a religious being. The frame of nature, the different orders of sentient life, might benefit from it: he alone could rise to the elevation and sanctity of its idea. It was briefly announced, but it is full of inferential meaning. It is prophetic and germinant. Doubtless much accompanied, interpreted, and enforced it, which it fell not within the province of the

* The present treatise in the series of "Tracts for the Times," comes before the public with all the solemnity of "last words." It is an impressive circumstance, that two of the most distinguished men engaged to write in this series—Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Hamilton—should have been summoned away, ere it was closed, to the congenial Sabbath of Heaven. In the case of Dr. Chalmers, the treatise, from the short time between the engagement and his death, was not prepared; in that of Dr. Hamilton, the subject grew in interest and attractiveness as he meditated on it, so that "he could not let it go," and what he intended as a tract, swelled into a volume. No one will regret that his powerful and sanctified mind was induced to linger over such a theme; or that among his last and most eloquent pleadings with men ere he passed into eternity, was the call to "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy." This treatise forms part of the volume "Horæ et Vindiciæ Sabbaticæ," and is printed from it by Dr. Hamilton's own permission. Written at any period of his public life, it would have expressed the deep and intelligent convictions of a great mind; written when the presentiment of death was upon him, and "eternity beginning to throw on him its mysterious gleams, through the growing shades of his evening life," it is like his dying message to the Church and to the world.

historian to record. It was adapted to the circumstances of innocence. We do not, therefore, read in it any restriction upon labour, any injunction of bodily rest. How could it contain that clause which in the future became so invaluable? Spontaneously and lavishly did the earth yield its increase. Man, soon as Eden was planted, was "put into it to dress it and keep it." But he knew no harassing toils. To train the flower, to prop the fruit, to prune luxuriant excess, to separate tangled redundance, were his only arts of husbandry and tasks of labour. Not then did he need the weekly rest. Otherwise it revolved to him unwearied and unspent. From his everyday occupation, simple and untiring, he would indeed abstain. It was still the season of *rest*. His body craved it not. It was the rather addicted to that mental activity of love and adoration which is the true repose of holy minds. To him it could only be the interval of a more intense and festal devotion. He had but with deeper solemnity to summon himself: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul!" He was a temple of the living God, in which was perpetual sacrifice: always holy, this was the most prepared offering, this was the most intimate visitation, of the God. But when the "ground was cursed for man's sake," when he was sentenced to "eat of it in sorrow all the days of his life," when it "brought forth thorns and thistles to him," when he must "in the sweat of his face eat bread till he returned to the dust,"—then did the *statute of religion* require the weekly suspension of muscular labour, to secure the opportunity of the spiritual rest. It gave relief to the body—a merciful relaxation of the doom of labour—but the Sabbath thus established its own protection and safeguard. It was the same it always was; but, by its blessed expansiveness, it adapts itself to fallen man, and to all the conditions of his fall. It can be construed to all circumstances. The change is not in itself, but in the altered case. Touch not its life, impair not its sanctity, but leave

it to its Divine generosity. Having been granted for the holy rest of man ere he transgressed and bore a daily burden, it being perpetually binding on him whatever might be his moral relations, it demanded for its due regulation, that labour should be intermitted. Now, He who exacted this punishment of sin, was pleased to mitigate it upon His *own day*. We consequently find—when this statute is specifically connected with Judaism, though laid upon a moral basis which confirms it to all mankind—that this mitigation is made a part and test it. This is necessary to its consistency. It must have been always so from the period of the malediction of the ground: it must be always so while man goeth forth to his labour. The spirit and observance of the Sabbath would be incompatible with quotidian life: they who treated days indifferently would fail of all its profit. This accommodation of it is in vain pleaded against its real uniformity. In vain is it contended that we have two different commands. For the *statute of religion* maintains its primordial character, when incorporated with the code of Sinai. The mechanical rest, though made necessarily prominent, is not the end. It is but an incident. It is the precaution and guide to something better. Such abstinence from "any manner of work" would not of itself be to "keep holy the Sabbath-day." It is but a means to an end. Now, where, throughout this code, is the statute of religion, if it be not in its fourth precept? Where else is it written, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart? Not in those which precede it: they are only interdicts upon polytheism, idol-worship, and profanity. Not in those which follow: for they only regard the ethics of man, and of man in the present state. But "on those two commandments," or summaries and heads of commandments, "hang all the law and the prophets." Here is it to be found, if found at all. Therefore, the law of the Sabbath, as to the statute of religion, must always survive, and always

oblige, as long as man remains what he is. He never can be so considered, that it shall not be his duty to love God. Its *principle* requires, with an indefeasible right, this expression of religion from him: it demands, for its respect and hallowing, the laying aside of every business and care which would interfere with it. Sabbath is *holy rest;* it only involves, by condition and consequence, animal rest. *That* is its vitality and essence: *this* is but corresponding facility and form.

Who, then, can conceive of its repeal? It is an everlasting ordinance. The thought of its abrogation has no place in Scripture. It travels with every age; it coalesces with every economy. Whatever is wanting, whatever is superseded, it endures. It renews itself as the bow in the cloud, it completes itself like the horns of the crescent moon, it journeys with the circuit of the sun. The things of earth no more affect it than they can the wonders of the sky. It is established in the foundations of immutable morality and religion. Whatever the modification of its circumstances and its periods, it is still the Sabbath. So, when Prophecy builds the temple (Ezek. xl.) of an unknown magnificence, showing in vision what was never substantiated in a material frame,—that pile of spiritual architecture which is to grace the millennial age (an interpretation which its unaccomplished model and indefinable mysteriousness compel us to assume), the glorious Church,—then is it commanded that "the gate of the inner court shall be shut the six working days, but on the Sabbath it shall be opened." It comes not in mind that the Sabbath should cease, though it is never entitled the seventh day. Sabbath is the proper name for the thing, whatever the time in which it may recur. After the same manner, our Lord forewarns the destruction of Jerusalem: "Pray ye that your flight may not be on the Sabbath-day." No doubt can exist that this was counsel to His disciples to fly the impending doom. Forty years, at least, elapsed from His ascension ere

that judgment fell. Christians would at that era keep the Sabbath-day, or His counsel would be unavailing. We need not go into the reasons which would make their escape more perilous on the Sabbath: it suffices that it might so have happened, and hence it is clear that such was their practice. They had a Sabbath, full of duty and observance, whose stillness might excite a sense of false security, whose hallowing might leave them unguarded and unprepared. The name changed it not; for whatever the modification, it was the holy rest, bringing with it the secular remission,—it was none other than the Sabbath of God.

Our previous argumentation authorises us to expect, and prepares us to allow, enlargement of blessing and sanctity in this institute, when it comes into contact and cohesion with Christianity. If it refined with Judaism, gathering up all its revelations, and filling itself with all its hopes, what must be the influence of this relation? "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory which excelleth."

It is not uncommon, in human legislation, to promulgate new declaratory acts in exposition and enforcement of older statutes. Their authority is thus assumed; they are only the more confirmed and extended.

A chief glory of this dispensation is constituted in the dignity of the Messiah's person and work. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." Other messengers are postponed to him in a manner which annihilates comparison and competition. "For this apostle and high priest of our profession was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God." But while this language,

attesting supreme Divinity, throws back to an infinite distance all created claim, it proves that He "thinks it not robbery to be equal with God." If the analogy of the "house" is to the Church, and the "all things built" refer to its dispensations and interests, and not to proper creation, still it is "his own house," and He is therefore God. It is the care of Scripture to invest Him with all *religious control:* "he is both Lord and Christ." He is "set as king upon the holy hill of Zion." He is "a priest upon his throne." He is "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour." Nor must this be forgotten in any argument that may arise as to the modification of law, if he shall will it. The essence of moral law cannot be changed: the form of its institutions may. If it need be proved that the first day of the week is appointed by Him for the keeping of the holy rest, it cannot be doubted that it is His right and His power to decree it. "He is head over all things to the Church." It is His prerogative, for it is "he who changeth the times and the seasons," and "all power is given to him in heaven and in earth." Everything that can enter into the category of Christianity is impropriatedly His. View it as a kingdom: it is the kingdom of Christ. View it as a faith: He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. View it as a Church: it is His body. His is the sole authority. A change in the accidents of the Sabbath must be within His competence and jurisdiction.

But some collateral illustrations may be found to prove that "his right it is." These may, at the same time, answer many a rising objection. For it is not unlikely, it is not unnatural, that difficulties may be felt in such a re-arrangement of the Sabbath, unless the precise authority thus order it which at first commanded it. It may, perhaps, be deemed doubtful whether an *equal* authority could so decide. The requirement may be of the evidence that it is the very *same.*

We suppose, then, that it is alleged that no autho-

rity, save that of the Creator, could alter jot or tittle of the original Sabbath: since it was the record and celebration of His recent work, He alone can be entitled to be heard in its revision. The proper Maker of all things must interpose: no delegated power can deserve a momentary attention. We received it from His mouth, and His mouth only can supplement or transform it. He who "bound" exclusively can "loose." "For ever it is settled in heaven," except He who speaketh from heaven can express, in a new sanction to its force, a new application of its principle. All that can be required is, that it shall gain in importance, and strengthen in edification.

We may then ask, is Christ so fully and distinctly this very Creator, that His edict concerning the Sabbath may be affirmed as the will of Him who, at the close of creation, ordained it? Was the Sabbath dictated by himself, He being really the Creator? This is not left for doubt and controversy. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." "He was in the world, and the world was made by him." "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands." (John i. 3, 10; Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 10.) The argument is perfect. Testimony cannot be more explicit. That which was necessarily a Divine act is His established claim. For even on the sixth day, personal Deity is revealed: "Let us make man!" The style is sustained: "Behold the man is become as one of us!" The Second Person immediately creates. It is because He is the Mediator. It is a great prospective arrangement. "God created all things by Jesus Christ." All Divine acts are common to the Divinity, but they may be also specific, and even subordinate. The development of Subsistences

in the Godhead is a development of offices and relations undertaken by them. This work is ascribed to the Son. Therefore if any mistrust arose in our mind, whether the Sabbath might, in any wise or sort, be governed by the Saviour, His direct and specific Creatorship furnishes the most unequivocal warrant. He "made" it. It is His own ordination.

But a jealousy of any interference with what is so solemnly fixed, may be felt on account of the ratification of the Sabbath-law to "the ancient people." "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them." Who shall disturb in any way or to any degree a rule so peremptory, precise, and plain? What hand can touch the tables which came from that "right hand?" What power dare trench upon that "fiery law?" Yet may we inquire: Who *then* propounded it? The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives an indubitable answer. "And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: *Whose voice then shook the earth!*" (Heb. xii. 24, 25, 26.) Therefore we read, in the defence of Stephen, that Moses "was with the angel who spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with the fathers." (Acts vii. 38.) This angel is evidently distinguished from the "disposition," or marshalling, "of angels,"—when the law was ordained, or marshalled "in the hand of a mediator." (Gal. iii. 19.) He is paramount. He is the Angel of the flaming bush, the Angel of the Divine presence, the Messenger of the Covenant, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, Jehovah! Therefore Paul, in addressing the Corinthians, says, "Neither let us tempt

Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." Were not the indication clear, we must remember that the Jews, until the days of Christ, had "not heard the Father's voice at any time nor seen his shape." But would we identify the declarer of the law, we must ponder the words of David in spirit—"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men." The application of this prediction is unquestionable. (Psa. lxviii.; Eph. iv.) The same retinue crowded Olivet which erst had shone on Sinai, and the same personage ascended from the blooming brow of the one, that had, in distant ages, descended upon the stern peaks of the other. So, should there be any suspicion that a change, of whatever kind, cannot take place in the circumstances of the Sabbath, because of its absolute promulgation in the desert—the proof is at hand to relieve and to obviate it, in the assured fact that the Lord Jesus was Himself the asserting Lawgiver.

Nor is there less reason to gather from Scripture, that to Him was committed the entire economy of revealed truth and worship since the creation of the world. "By him God constituted the ages" or dispensations: "According to the disposition of the ages which he made in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Heb. i. 2; Eph. iii. 11.) We must believe that He "walked in the garden," when the doom of the tempter and the deliverance of man were in one oracle pronounced. We trace Him in phantom guise, from tent to tent of patriarchs, and from altar to altar of saints. "The Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets, signified to them, and testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." "Esaias saw his glory and spake of him,"—adored by the seraph, enthroned in the temple, summoning the messenger, issuing the command, inflicting the judgment, preserving the "holy seed,"

and ordering all the events of universal Providence and religion. To this view there are who oppose the authority of Christ in the present economy; they press us with our own argument, that the peculiar honour of this economy consists in the immediate intervention of Christ. But an important distinction is overlooked. The government of the former dispensation was *in* Him, that of this is directly *by* Him. His was formerly the superintendence: His is now the administration. The act of anticipative, shadowy, outward form is most inferior to His personal incarnation, which abideth for ever. None intervene—no king in Jeshurun, no mediator on Sinai. He stands alone. And therefore, as all religious dispensation has ever been placed under Him, so is He entitled, by His more direct sovereignty of this, to select any appointment common to them, to all, and, while fully preserving it, variously to mould it. It is right to chase and stamp His own image and superscription upon it. Intromitted into each, traversing their series, the Sabbath may only be more amassed, more honoured, more infused with life and power, until it shall throw around it all the lights which have successively fallen on it, and shall embody "the manifold wisdom of God."

This may be the fitting stage of the argument at which to inquire whether the Messiah—in "the days of His flesh," during the full execution of His Mediatorial work—so delivered His mind concerning the Sabbath, that He challenged peculiar property in it, that He asserted perfect right over it? Did He ever proclaim His power in respect of it? We find a remarkable utterance—three Evangelists record it—such as the Creator might have spoken while He ushered in the first Sabbath—such as the "only Potentate" might have resounded through Sinai's trumpet—only to be justified by the preface, "But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple,"—an absolute, imperial utterance: "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day."

(Matt. xii, 8; Mark ii. 28; Luke vi. 5). Not less stupendous is His announcement, when, on another occasion, He is arraigned for His violation of the Sabbath: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." It is a co-ordinate claim! It is an awful parallelism! "Just as my Father worketh hitherto, though he rested from all his works, in governing and blessing the worlds he made, so I work, with no more infraction of that holy rest, in exercising miraculous power and healing human woe."

What we affirm is, the alteration in the time of the holy rest, together with its aggrandisement of meaning: it is to be celebrated by Christians upon the first day in the week instead of the last, and it is henceforth to be specifically commemorated by them in honour of the resurrection of their Lord.

Though we do not perceive how any such change of time can affect the essence of the Sabbath-law, and must maintain most strenuous that it does not—yet, as this is a very palpable alteration, it may be proper to learn whether this be the first of the kind, whether some transposition has not far earlier occurred. This would prepare every mind and reconcile every scruple. Such an arrangement we think may be detected in the history of the Old Testament. In the exode of the Jews, their leader enters upon a new computation of time. The commencement of the year was changed. The passover was henceforth to date it. From "even unto even" is the day commanded to be regarded—the original order, but evidently not *so* calculated at that time, or the *first* regulation would not need to be renewed. A general, though not exact, reckoning of the Sabbath might nevertheless be maintained. But one important event seems to necessitate the conclusion of a change. On the fifteenth day the tribes took their journey from Elim to Sim. They marched not on a Sabbath, and therefore it was not one. But the Sabbath following this must have been the twenty-second of the month; when it rained neither quails nor manna. The

miracle began upon the evening of the fifteenth, and intermitted after the morning of the sixth day from it. If, therefore, this latter was the sacred day, so was that which ended the former week. The probability is, that then the holy rest was moved; whether forward or backward concerns not the case. A change in the time will account for that degree of uncertainty which the inspired historian intimates to have pervaded the minds of the people. The Sabbath was for the next forty years to be denoted by the cessation of diurnal miracle. Might it not mark a new series? Thus early, if this collation be true, and this inference be just, was it shown that the period of Sabbath was indifferent, if otherwise its due sanctity and proportionate time were but guarded.

It will now be necessary to demand whether Christianity be itself a sufficient reason to justify this change in the circumstances of the Sabbath, the supreme authority having assented. We speak of the Incarnation, the Sacrifice, the Resurrection of the Eternal Son. We cite the facts and doctrines and operation of Redemption. What must not these overshadow? What may not these displace? These are wonders, and depths, and unsearchable riches! Angels desire to look into them! They are past finding out!

These are the final causes of Creation.—We have but to think of "the Lamb who was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world,"—but to recollect, that "It became him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings,"—to seize the mighty conception that this universal frame is but mere platform and scaffolding to a purpose older than time, and with which no material fabric can compare. No form of the Divine character can be so glorious as that which is acquired here. No confirmation of justice and law can be so perfect as that which is thus consummated. The handiwork, the beauty, the wisdom in which all

is made, the establishing of the world, the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills, are nothing but subserviences to a great moral scheme, which is itself swallowed up in this great salvation. "He has magnified his word above all his name." The birthday song of creation may well rise and louden into "a new song!" It finds a nobler burden! The festival of nature may well adorn itself with new badges and strains! It receives a surpassing memorial! The Original Sabbath gracefully merges into the fulness of the Christian Sabbath. Until then its use was partial, now it is complete—until then nascent, now mature—until then enigmatic, now deciphered—until then a truncated pillar, now elevated to its height and decorated with its capital!

A Spiritual creation, being superior to that which is material and even intellectual, deserves its distinct remembrancer and honour.

The Sabbath of innocence did not long renew itself. It then was adapted to the condition of sin. Infinite mercy suffered not man to be bereft of it. Its calls was still to him, and it pointed the way to a refuge-altar. But Christianity was sent to retrieve. This it had, in some measure, done by what was known to them who lived in former ages. This is even strongly taught us: "For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them." Now, however, it is fully known, and is in full operation. It is a great renovating scheme and process. It is to make all things new. It is to apply a creative power to the salvation of man. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." These are the effects to which prophecy directs our eye:—"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." And, therefore, is it most reasonable and congruous,—when a spiritual energy is breathed into

the elements of the soul, when a Divine image is impressed upon it fairer than that it lost, when a Divine nature is imparted to it more perfect than it ever could have otherwise received, when an eternal life is lavished, when a paradise is prepared in comparison with which all the charms of Eden are withered leaves—that there should stand forth a memorial and sign of this intensest agency, which fills the understanding with knowledge and the affections with purity, which insures freest choice, and necessitates spontaneous delight! How appropriate that the Sabbath, the monument of the first and inferior creation should be exalted, by a characteristic accommodation, by a fresh trophy, as the monument of this! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 3-5).

The Jewish dispensation could not debar the juster and higher appropriation of the Sabbath.

It had been renewed to Israel, a people which had no more peculiar right in it than any other. It was the property of the human race. We own its solemn incorporation with their religion. But that religion looked favourably upon all. It was a refuge to every stranger who would embrace it. It snatched the Sabbath from none. It was its guardian, but not its gaoler—it held it not as a captive, but entertained it as a guest. When that angel-visitant would depart, and take its lot with a universal dispensation, it was but restored to its proper range. No wrong was done. The Jewish Sabbath—which was its incidental and temporary and local form—must cease. Judaism was ready to vanish away. This had been foretold by its own seers. "And it shall come to pass, in those

days, saith the Lord, they shall *say* no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it *come to mind;* neither shall they *remember* it; neither shall they *visit* it; neither shall that be done any more." "If that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." The Sabbath, by its Christian appropriation, reverts to the universality, and rests on the perpetuity, for which it was designed. Christianity became its deliverer —its exponent and security.

Our blessed Lord came to "fulfil all righteousness," to exhibit all obedience. He enforced the law of Moses and those who sat in his seat. "He was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." He kept the seventh-day rest, according to commandment and not tradition. "As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day." In the violations of it charged upon Him, we see but its true import. He did not formally inculcate the Sabbath, but He did unfold the law which contained it. It was already kept with an external precision. There was no need to impress it. All His teachings, however,—those which correct its abuses,—go to prove that it was most holy and beneficial. They are not idle pains and cares for that which was nearly obsolete, and on the eve of its dissolution. But His every rebuke or precept was designed to show the necessity of a piety more than ceremonial. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He, therefore, virtually urged the Sabbath, that greatest commandment, in its spirit and its influence, while He did not neglect the least.

But immediately after His resurrection, "when he came into his kingdom," we lose sight of the seventh

day as the interval of rest, and find substituted for it the first. Yet this is only true of Christian observance: "in every city was Moses preached, being read in the synagogue every *Sabbath-day*." We trace the change in His own mysterious visitations to His assembled disciples, and in their own practice. Having risen from the tomb on the first day of the week—being seen of four several parties during the earlier hours of the day—having vanished from the travellers to Emmaus after sitting at meat with them—He suddenly stood among His disciples, then collected together, and saluted them. It wears the character of a religious meeting. The record warrants the conclusion. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus." Why is it added, "being the first day of the week?" Is it not as an index to the reader that it was a *particular* day? All knew what day it was, its number; this is the memento of its *sacredness*. The Jew would know what was meant by the notice that an event occurred on the *seventh day:* a Christian would equally understand an allusion to the first.* It should be remembered, for a future argument, that it was then that the apostles received their full commission and investiture—when the Saviour spoke to them—"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "Re-

* It is quite clear that Σαββατον is sometimes employed to express the *week*. So the Pharisee boasted: "I fast twice in the week," literally, on the Sabbath, which could not be, for it was a festal day. Similar instances are probably in Mark xvi., 1, 9. The Septuagint always uses Ἑβδομας. It seems that the *singular* number only is then employed. But a peculiar phrase repeatedly occurs as to the *first day* after the resurrection of Christ: Μια Σαββατων, strictly the first of the Sabbaths. In this conception, as would be necessary for syntax, the plural is always adopted. But another syntactical form, it is evident, might have been introduced. The Sabbath, the seventh day of the Jews, was frequently spoken of in the plural, sometimes absolutely, more generally ἡμέρα being understood. Now this language becomes, we think, significant. "The first of the Sabbaths" is applied to the day of the resurrection, that plural never denoting the week. The *four* Evangelists thus specifically, uniformly give it. The last repeats it when describing the visit of the risen Jesus to His assembled disciples on the evening of that day—"being

ceive ye the Holy Ghost." Then did He also renew the sacrificial feast. "When he sat at meat with them"—the common meal having terminated, He repeated the significant actions peculiar to this—"he took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave unto them." It was understood. "Their eyes were opened, and they knew him!" Thomas was absent on that occasion, and expressed, when he heard of its marvels, a vehement distrust. Throughout that week did not Jesus re-appear. When the second week commences, "the disciples are within, and Thomas with them." They are all gathered together, a religious conclave. Once more Jesus stands among them, triumphing over material resistance, and, as at the first, salutes them. It is religious recognition and greeting. Is there nothing marked in this interval of time? His other interviews are not thus marked. That of Tiberias reveals the apostles in their secular calling, and becomes the occasion of the final miracle. That of the mountain in Galilee, and that of the five hundred brethren, requiring absence from home and open air muster, debarred the strictness, and were inappropriate to the obligation of the holy rest. Let us now follow the course of the apostles. Let us revolve their acts. Christ has descended. Until then He had met them at appointed seasons. We may believe that He had passed six first-day Sabbaths with them. He had "assembled together with them." "They were come together." Thus are their communions described. They then wait for "the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye have heard of me." On the next first day of the week, which we ascertain by the epoch of Pentecost,

the first of the Sabbaths," evidently, as argued in the text, the first day of the week—but with stronger intention and import. Again, we find the phrase, where its meaning cannot be doubted.—(Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) The first of the Sabbaths may, without violence, describe a new series—the resurrection-day actually the first, and successive days still reckoned from the first. I accept this evidence—it seems to me just and beautiful; others may deem it more fanciful than cogent. I learn more and more to forbear with others as to the *impression* of any evidence. *Quantum Valeat.*

we discover "them all with one accord in one place." The anniversary of the giving of the law would not be selected for an innovation which dishonoured that law. The descent of the Spirit crowns that Christian festival. The first Christian sermon is preached, and victories of conversion are multiplied. The first Christian church is formed, and the benign influences of that holy organisation and fellowship are dispread. The first public "breaking of bread" is celebrated, and the feast is crowded with guests. This must be periodical. It is distinguished from "the daily breaking of bread," which was only "eating their meat at home."* Therefore, this publicity is always noted in connexion with it—"When ye come together into one place, *is it* not to eat the Lord's Supper?"† In the same manner, while it is said: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together" (not an unmeaning reference to His appointed day), it is immediately subjoined: "Let us keep the feast." An incidental light is thrown upon the very day, for it is declared just before this exhortation, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."‡ Now that Paschal feast commenced on the first day of the week, which day was to be kept as a Sabbath, even as the following seventh day. Historic proof generally consists of circumstances which seem to arise without design, and to be recorded without care. These, without any consciousness or art of order, readily combine. The "undesignedness" (Paley's term) furnishes a most convincing argument for their truth. Such is that which we obtain. Easy, simple, natural passages supply it. The account of the visit of Paul and his companions, at Troas, is of this kind. They tarried seven days. Yet is there only one worshipping day.

* In our translation it is given, "from house to house," but "κατ' οικον" will not bear such rendering. It is to be feared, like some other interpolations in this particular book (chap. xii. 4; xix. 37), that the motive was to identify the Lord's Supper with this domestic meal, and thus to justify its private administration.

† 1 Cor. xi. 20. This is the true pointing. ‡ 1 Cor. v. *passim.*

It cannot be anticipated. It is not the seventh-day Sabbath. Then might he have departed on the sixth day of his sojourn. This he would have desired to do. All bespeaks haste. "He had no rest in his spirit." (2 Cor. ii. 13.) "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (an evident usage), "Paul preached to them." He had waited six days for this opportunity. It was his only one: "ready to depart on the morrow." So must we understand his visit to Tyre: "Having found disciples, we tarried there seven days."—"Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The idea is not of a weekly hoard, but contribution. It was a part of "The fellowship," the collection. It was to be "gathered" then and there, that there might be no "gatherings" when he, who "gave this order to the Churches," should "come." But does it not say more than that the first day was the Sabbath-rest? Does it not imply that the six preceding days were spent in labour whose profits God had prospered? Does it not remind of the ancient cast of expression — In it thou shalt do no work, six days shalt thou do all thy work! Does it not establish the disuse, the negation of the seventh-day rest? And Paul may be considered an independent witness. He did not receive the Gospel of men. Speaking of the Lord's Supper, so intimately identified with the Christian Sabbath, he exclaims: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." Amidst the solitudes of this rock, John kept the account of his exiled days. What different scenes and seasons had he known! "When he remembered these things, he poured out his soul in him." But a Christian Sabbath came as the halcyon of the storm, an iris of beauty and of hope: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day"—"I was full of inspiration, kindled with prophetic rapture, on a day too appropriate for the vision not to be particularised, too fixed in its revolution not to be certified, too

precious in its suggestion not to be rehearsed." We behold, then, that holy rest which began in Paradise still breathing around Patmos—that dial, which first caught the sun of the seventh day of creation and circled that Sabbath, now throws its mystic shadow forward four thousand years, and lights up that Lord's-day in the Ægean deep. The testimony was soon to be sealed up: all vision was about to close: but ere its completion a holy dignity is added to the day, and its highest appropriation is asserted. The Lord will have it be known as His! "Lord of the Sabbath,"— this is His holy, peculiar—it is His day! Agreeable to this new denomination is the hymn of the ancient Church. It is raised in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ. "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner." This is repeatedly quoted by our Lord and His disciples, and applied by them to His triumph over death in a way not to be mistaken. The Church then swells the canticle of victory: "This is *the day which the Lord hath made:* we will rejoice and be glad in it." That is prophecy: this is its fulfilment. It is immediately associated with a nobler order of worship: "This gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter." Perhaps a direct testimony is borne to this change, in the time of the institution, by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He speaks of three rests: that of the day of the completed creation, that of the promised land, and that of heaven. But, as if it might be supposed that, amidst varying dispensations, the Sabbath was lost, he adds, "There remaineth," there survives, "a Sabbatism for the people of God."* Only in this place of the chapter does the word occur. It would be very difficult to give any other explanation of the reason assigned, if this be not intended

* Heb. iv. 9. The general reluctance of this opinion seems to arise from the belief, that the conclusion of the whole argument is from the 9th verse, whereas it is plainly in the 11th. From the 7th *unto* the 11th is a parenthesis, and the inference of the 9th is from what is raised *therein*.

to express the Lord's-day, the resurrection day: "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his works, as God did from his." It is the day when He rested from the toils and sufferings of redemption — the day consecrated to them and their reward." "He had finished the work given him to do." "It is finished!" How due the remembrance and the honour to Him of whom it was foretold: "His rest shall be glorious!"

There may be an easy reason assigned why a more early recognition of the Christian Sabbath is not found in the history of the Church. After the Pentecost, religion seemed fully to possess the converts. Every feeling and interest was swallowed up in it. "Great grace was upon them all." Weeks could they not suffer to intervene between their assemblies. "They continued *daily* with one accord in the temple." The claims of labour and the importunities of want were obviated. "All that believed were together,* and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every man had need." This continued at least a year. The judgment on Ananias and Sapphira prevented the increase of this sodality, which was always perfectly voluntary; and as always independent of, though perhaps coincident with, the Church. Speedily it came to a close. Hospitality and alms succeeded to intercommunity of property. But thus we see not only how the fervour of the first believers carried them over the distinctive first day, though never to forget it, sanctifying all days—but how they were enabled to do this. They economised at once their means and their wants. Superflux counterveiled deficiency. In their holy transport, the six days' occupation ceased. This was most undesirable as a permanent state of things. Presently all resumed their social places, and henceforth signified how possible and convenient it is to be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the

* Acts ii. 44. "σαν ἐπι τὸ ἀυτο" it should be "were engrossed in this."

Lord." We only seize the historic notice, to account for the omission of specified mention as to the Sabbath, when joy could not stint it within literal rule, and when the necessity of daily work was superseded.

It may be thought that an immediate commandment was necessary to authenticate any such change. It will be often found that this is unnecessary. That goes forward, that continues in force, which is not abrogated. We do not want the proof of its enforcement, in such an instance, but of its repeal. Two views may be presented of the case before us.

1. If it can be shown that the apostles, in their public character, and with their unanimous sanction, proceeded in any uniform course and custom, that becomes to us a rule. Their regular example has all the authority and all the binding force of a promulgated law. Their practice of the Christian Sabbath, their non-observance of the seventh day, may be proved. This, then, is the ordinance which they have delivered unto us.

2. If we can establish that the apostles were taught Christianity beyond all that direct information tells us—that they were made its depositaries and magistrates—then may we expect their practical judgments upon all duty. Forty days were they in direct and awful communications with their Lord between His resurrection and ascension. This was the term of the continuance of Moses on the mount. "Christ showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, *speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*" "He gave *commandments* unto the apostles whom he had chosen." This is the Gospel administration. How did they magnify their office! "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." These ordinances might be "by *word or epistle.*" We see them acted upon, and thus learn them as embodied for ourselves. "So ordain I in all churches." We see in this manner the reflected will of Christ. Here

are these "commandments." Here are the "things pertaining to the kingdom of God." The apostles would be, of all men, most reluctant to "break one of these least commandments, and to teach men so;" they would not have thus decided, had not their credentials been explicit and unimpeachable. They were not men given to change. None of them were superior to strong prepossessions. These large views of the Gospel found but slow entrance into their minds. While "Peter was to be blamed," the vow of Paul in Cenchrea scarcely seems to have been clear of undue concession. Any wise, they were not eager or precipitate for innovation. They were slow of heart to believe. Now, that they had innovated upon *some* religious usages is abundantly evident. The charge against Stephen was, "that he had said that Jesus of Nazareth should change the customs which Moses delivered." When in Corinth "the Jews made insurrection against Paul," their accusation was, that "he persuaded men to worship God contrary to the law."

It is more agreeable to the spirit and general conduct of the apostles, though they often spake of "their commandment," to leave the institutions of their ancient law to sink of themselves into desuetude. Their authority had expired. They had answered their end. They were fulfilled. To borrow the legal language of our country, their demise was determined. A sort of respect was still inseparable from them. They were not, therefore, harshly condemned, or abruptly abolished. Christians were committed to the working of their own minds to lay them aside. Confidence was felt that they must outgrow them. So ceased circumcision and many a ceremonial observance; so ceased, gently, gradually, the seventh-day appropriation before the Christian enactment of the first. That from the beginning of the dispensation was peremptory; all being changed, "there was made of necessity a change also of the law." And we, therefore, observe certain statements

of a more decisive kind as this dispensation advances. The Judaising influence is sternly denounced. At last, the incompatibility of any adherence to the law with Christian privilege is asserted: "We have an altar, whereof they have *no right* to eat who serve the tabernacle. Let us go forth unto Jesus *without the camp*, bearing his reproach" (Heb. xiii. 10, 13).

The Sabbath, we have seen, was a part of the Moral Law. There it not only had a place, but it gave a meaning and motive to it. With that Christianity cannot interfere. "Yea, we establish the law." Never is it represented to be a part of the ceremonial economy. It is not a type of anything but itself. It is archetype and antitype. With nothing can it exchange. Circumcision may pass into baptism. The Passover may be translated into the Lord's Supper. But the Sabbath is the Sabbath, and nothing but the Sabbath can it be. It owed a particular construction to Judaism; it owes a specific application to Christianity. But to no dispensation owes it existence, or authority, or right. It is from the beginning. It is the parent of dispensations. It is the root of religions. "Its tabernacle is in the sun."

We are aware that Scripture has been quoted to render the question of its observance indifferent, to expose it rather in the light of a burden than of a blessing. It would be strange, could this be established. Laxity is abhorrent to the spirit of revelation. The statement, upon which this doctrine of indifference is founded, proceeds from Paul: (Rom. xiv. 5.) "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day." Our translators have added "alike," which has no pretext of place in the original Greek. This must refer to the Jewish feasts. He who had been educated beneath their associations, would feel much scrupulousness in renouncing them. If he "regarded it unto the Lord," he was not to be "judged" by them who "regarded it not unto

the Lord." Also, in the warning of the same writer: "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *sabbaths*,"—we trace the same rule of interpretation. These are all confessedly "shadows of good things to come." They rise in a gradation. They first respect offerings, then religious times. We have previously remarked, that Sabbath not only is used in Levitical language to denote, as it properly does, that of the week, but that of years, the seventh and the forty-ninth. The holy-day was an addition to the Sabbath, the new moon was a feast of blowing of trumpets, and sabbaths of years must be impracticable, apart from the miracles of the soil with which formerly they had been attended. To these no adherence could be obligatory. Apart from a *spiritual* appropriation, they were always disavowed and denounced: "The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." Here certainly the weekly Sabbath cannot be understood. The ceremonial, when abused, may be slighted and revoked; the moral, however perverted, must be retained in honour and force. But we can feel no sympathy with them who would draw from these and similar passages an oblique attempt to invalidate the Sabbath's holy rest. Was its enforcement by Christianity to put a "yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither the Jewish fathers nor their children were able to bear?" Had they complained of it? Did they esteem it a grievance? It was a law fulfilled by love. Well, then, did the Church in Jerusalem—apostles, elders, brethren, omit all thought of it when "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them to lay upon" the Gentiles "no greater burden than these necessary things." Why should they have adverted to it more than to any other part of the Decalogue? They left it as the rest, inviolate. If it be rejoined that the seventh commandment is enforced, the answer is, that for-

nication means here either idolatry or the impurity of its orgies. It is inconceivable that the Christian Hebrew should hail the loss of such a boon, or that the Christian heathen should not welcome such a privilege. How could the one part with it? How could the other reject it? Were they to be told that this was the liberty wherewith Christ made them free? Were they to be directed to the cross, which taketh away sin, to learn that the Sabbath,—the inheritance of all ages, the glory of all dispensations,—was the handwriting of an ordinance that was against us, and was contrary to us,—and to behold it blotted out—taken out of the way; and, as an erased, a cancelled, a repudiated thing, nailed contemptuously to the cross? It may not be, it cannot be. Cross of our Lord! Thy nails are to sustain Him! To pierce His hands and His feet! Not to dishonour the Sabbath with thy open shame for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof! There is no enmity in this law to abolish in His flesh! Thou takest away our sin, our every sin, but abstractest from us no good: thou dost not only reserve and save, but dost inaugurate our Sabbath, and becomest its life, its soul, its stay, its glory!

It may deserve a momentary notice, that the Sabbath question was never brought into dispute among the first Christians. The eating of blood, circumcision, and other injunctions or interdicts, were strenuously agitated; but this, which was a far more likely occasion and subject of debate, seems never to have disturbed the early Church. The general assent proves that it was formed under a decisive authority. We *know* that they did not observe the seventh-day rest. Judging from the facts before us in those primitive records, there is no other alternative than this: that the disciples either kept Sabbath on the first day of the week, or that they kept none at all.

The same notice may be taken of later controversy. Councils and diets were held during the dawning

centuries of Christianity; fierce and subtle were their contentions; but a doubt of the validity of the *Dies Dominica*, the Christian Sabbath, was never raised. Whether the seventh day was to be kept *likewise*, was often brought into debate. Whether it was not a preparatory fast, was fiercely contended. But this was left unimpeached. A few dreamers have, at intervals, endeavoured to restore the Jewish hours; but no *serious* opposition has been entertained. They who *irreligiously* attack it because of its Christian alliance, would as readily assail it by any other way, their only aim being to release themselves from any.

The ground of authority being laid, it is only fair to admire the fitness of the arrangement. How, otherwise, were the Christians to be distinguished? How withdrawn from Judaic attachments and scruples? How gathered into assemblies and organised into Churches? How taught and disciplined? They were a peculiar people, most social, most devout, their faith and worship most loving and fraternal: a specific day was most due and essential to them.

The Christian Sabbath ought to be transfused with Christianity. It requires, for its due celebration, that it be impregnated with its most peculiar doctrines and hopes. The risen Saviour must be prominent, exclusive, in it. He is its Priest. His "excellent ministry" is its basis and genius. Our prayers are only heard as He is our Intercessor, receiving them and offering them in His censer. Our thanksgivings are only accepted of God, because "in the midst of the Church He sings praises." Our preaching were vain, but that "He preaches righteousness in the great congregation." All is in His name, in His stead, for Him and by Him—He is its Lord. We obey His authority. We inquire His will. "The word of Christ" is its one theme. On "His day," to the solitary captive, was the vision of the candlesticks and the stars. Still that day witnesses the vigilant care of His Churches and His ministers.

He walketh among them. He holdeth them in His right hand. If it can dawn without bringing His person and His work fully before us, if its moments be not instinct with His redemption, if He be not our one thought and image, the bond of association is broken and the tablet of memory erased. Alpha and Omega of all mediatorial dispensation—He is the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, of His own consecrated day. He is its bright and morning star. He is the Sun of Righteousness that gilds it. His all hail meets us with its earliest beam: and when its shadows lengthen, our prayer is not in vain, "Abide with us; for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent."

Specially should this day be given to the Commemoration Feast. It was of old called the Day of Bread.* Unworthy is our regard to it, low is our state of devotion, if its weekly repetition could pall. It is unimaginable that the early Churches ever assembled and this was not the act of their highest transport—that Christian strangers when they met found not in this their familiar home-feast and endeared banquet—that martyrs ever took their last embrace of each other without being fortified by the holy signs. They died in a profession of which they were not ashamed. Amidst the gorgeous, but monotonous ceremonies of a paganised Christianity, we behold the foremost rank which the Lord's Supper held in primitive times. It was the nucleus of all worship and instruction. It gave significance and weight to all. The table of the Lord was ever spread. There the saints discerned the Lord's body, and had communion of His flesh and of His blood. It was the feast of charity. Blessed scenes! Why past ye so soon away? Why do not our hearts burn within us? Why is not this the never-failing staff of our pilgrimage? Why is not this the characteristic haunt of our discipleship? It cannot return too fre-

* *Dies Panis.* See Bingham's *Origines Ecclesiasticæ.*

quently. "As *often* as ye do it"—do we not mock that word?—"remember Christ Jesus." This is to be "done in remembrance of Him." "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come." "Before our eyes He is evidently set forth crucified among us." The practice of the first Churches should be revived: the Spirit who sat upon them might then visit us with their pentecost.*

O Sabbath! Needed for a world of innocence—without thee what would be a world of sin! There would be no pause for consideration, no check to passion, no remission of toil, no balm of care! He who had withheld thee would have forsaken the earth! Without thee, He had never given to us the Bible, the Gospel, the Spirit! We salute thee, as thou comest to us in the name of the Lord—radiant in the sunshine of that dawn which broke over creation's achieved work—marching downward in the tract of time, a pillar of refreshing cloud and of guiding flame—interweaving with all thy light new beams of discovery and promise—until thou standest forth more fair than when reflected in the dews, and imbibed by the flowers of Eden—more awful than when the trumpet rung of thee on Sinai! The Christian Sabbath! Like its Lord, it but rises again in Christianity, and henceforth records the rising day. And never since the tomb of Jesus was burst open by Him who revived and rose, has this day awakened but as the light of seven days, and with healing on its wings! Never has it unfolded without some witness and welcome, some song and salutation! It has been the coronation-day of martyrs, the feast-day of saints! It has been from the first until now the sublime custom of the Churches of God! Still the outgoings of its morning and its evening rejoice! It is a day of heaven upon earth! Life's sweetest calm, poverty's best birth-right, labour's only rest! Nothing has such a hoar of an-

* The Separatists, *our* fathers, received it weekly. See Hanbury's *Historical Memorials*, vol. iii. 147.

tiquity on it! Nothing contains in it such a history! Nothing draws along with it such a glory! Nurse of virtue, seal of truth! The household's richest patrimony, the nation's noblest safeguard! The pledge of peace, the fountain of intelligence, the strength of law! The oracle of instruction, the ark of mercy! The patent of our manhood's spiritual greatness! The harbinger of our soul's sanctified perfection! The glory of religion, the watch-tower of immortality! The ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reacheth to heaven, with the angels of God ascending and descending on it!

XIV.

THE SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S-DAY.

BY THE REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH,

RECTOR OF WATTON, HERTS.

THE LORD'S-DAY is a beautiful and endearing title given to the Christian Sabbath in the New Testament. This title is recorded on a most interesting occasion. The Apostle John was banished by the Emperor Domitian to the Isle of Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. While thus suffering for the truth, it pleased the Lord Jesus, who always regards His suffering people with special kindness, to favour him with those sublime and glorious visions of all that should happen to His Church, till His full and everlasting triumph, which we have recorded in the Book of Revelation. These visions were revealed to Him when He was "in the Spirit on the Lord's-day;"—that is, he was brought under the immediate impulse of the spirit of prophecy. As we read afterwards, the voice as it were of a trumpet talking with Him, said, "Come up hither, and I will show Thee things which must be hereafter; and immediately I was in the Spirit." The Holy Ghost thus honoured the Lord's-day by communicating upon it those invaluable prophecies — prophecies so to be studied by us, that He has begun and closed the Book of Revelation with promising the Divine blessing (Rev. i. 3, xxii. 7) on reading and keeping them.

THE PECULIAR TITLE GIVEN TO THE SABBATH—THE LORD'S-DAY—may impress our minds so as to help us duly to observe it. This title (Rev. i. 10) cannot mean the great and final day of the Lord's advent anticipated; the words which immediately follow

show that the instruction was adapted to the state, and suited to the circumstances, of the then existing Churches in Asia. The expression κυριακῇ is peculiar, and applied only in the New Testament to the Lord's-day and the Lord's Supper. This Divinely-inspired title, then, points out to us an ordinance set apart by the authority, and for the special honour, of our Redeemer.

Thus it signifies to us the passing away of *the peculiarities* of the Jewish Sabbath. The Sabbath-day was indeed appointed at the creation, and made thus universally obligatory on every human being. But when the law of Moses was given for the Jewish nation under peculiar circumstances, in addition to the explicit command of the Sabbath, as a moral duty included in the ten commandments, there were special directions as to their observance of it, which were of a positive character, imposed by the command of the great lawgiver with reference to that particular nation. As *the Sabbath was made for man*, and not for the Jews only, and as it is natural and reasonable that we should give portions of our time to the worship of God, it is a natural and moral law. As to the appointment of the particular day, it was positive and changeable; and the Son of Man, who is Lord of the Sabbath, has in this particular changed it, and so made the peculiarities of the Jewish Sabbath no longer binding.—(Exod. xxxv. 2, 3; Numb. xv. 30-35; Ps. cxviii. 22-24; Acts xx. 7; Gal. iv. 10; Col. ii. 16.) But the commandment of the Sabbath, as a natural and moral law, given at the creation, has never been repealed. It was spoken by the mouth of God himself to Israel, as a transition-stage between duties to God and duties to man, in the midst of the ten commandments, which He *wrote* Himself, and *added no more*. Thus it was proclaimed with a solemnity, giving to the obligation additional force and weight, which should impress every mind. It was also solemnly declared, as a law to all men, and confirmed by our Lord's assurance, that "the

Sabbath was made for man." The Lord's-day has the same reason for its observance as the Lord's Supper. It is specially appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is set apart from common uses for a special religious end—for His service, honour, and worship. It was predicted that the day on which the Lord rose from the grave should be a special day devoted to the honour of Christ.—(Ps. cxviii. 17-24.) The Lord would have us thus commemorate and rejoice in those great things which took place on this day, the completed work of redemption in the resurrection of Christ, and the fulfilled outpouring of His blessed Spirit.

What weighty, solemn reasons, then, have all who receive the Bible as the Word of God for sanctifying this day! Appointed from the beginning, given again with unequalled solemnity to Israel, modified for their use, and appointed by Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath, with a removal of everything restricted to one nation, and with statements that make it specially universal and evangelical; and then, in the last book of Scripture, having a title given to it that cannot but endear it to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity—how precious should our Sabbaths be! If Nehemiah singles it out as a special favour to Israel, "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and speakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and madest known unto them the holy Sabbath;" much more should Christians now view it as eminently right, and true, and good.

In considering the spiritual observance of this day—

I. THE LAYING ASIDE OF EVERYTHING THAT MAY IMPEDE THIS SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCE, MAY FIRST BE NOTICED.

The Lord's-day is invaluable, as it is a mighty help towards being spiritually-minded. "To be spiritually-minded is life and peace; to be carnally-minded is death." But that it may be this help, the day must be truly consecrated to God, and FORE-

THOUGHT AND PREPARATION are required for this. The direction, "Remember the Sabbath-day," may not only have a reference to its being appointed from the beginning, but also to the forethought requisite for the sanctifying of the day. The Jewish Sabbath began in the evening—"from even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath;"—and it may furnish us with a hint to have nothing of work that can be done on the Saturday deferred to the Lord's-day. Let us prepare to meet our God in His courts, by having as little as possible of interruption. Oh, that rich and poor did but attend to this—the rich requiring nothing that can be avoided from their dependents, and the poor forecasting things so, that all cleaning of the house, purchase of food, washing of clothes, and even sitting up late on Saturday night, might be avoided! Where there is a real desire to do it, it may generally be done. No doubt a worldly heart is one great thing to be striven against. How shall we get a mind undistracted with "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things!"

Some have found it to be an advantage to have a little social prayer-meeting with their neighbours on Saturday evening, for a blessing on the Sabbath. Where this can be attained, it calms the spirit, and prepares us for the holy day, by bringing down the Divine blessing, given specially in answer to social prayer.

The things to be actually laid aside concern daily business, worldly pleasures, idle conversation, and vain thoughts.

As to DAILY BUSINESS, we must lay aside all our ordinary earthly employment. The acting out this must be left in the main to each man's conscience. The command of God is most explicit: "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and

earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Works of necessity and works of charity are, it is true, excepted. Our Lord defended His disciples—(availing themselves of the permission of the Jewish law to pluck the ears of corn; Deut. xxiii. 25)—for doing this, when they were hungry, on the Sabbath-day.—(Matt. xii. 1-8.) But let us be careful not to make the necessity where God has not made it. The zeal of Nehemiah led him to testify against "treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem, and selling victuals on the Sabbath-day." This seems, afterwards, to have given great comfort to him, when he prays, "Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy." This sanctifying of the Sabbath will indeed, to a worldly mind, be dull work. It is a detection and disclosure of such a state of mind. Amos describes such as saying, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?" But this is a part of the blessedness of the Sabbath to the Christian; it enables him to withstand the stream of worldliness, with which the daily employments of life would otherwise overwhelm him.*

As to mere WORLDLY PLEASURES, we must separate wholly from them. The Scripture promises of Sabbath blessedness are founded on our doing this:—"If

* There is one serious obstruction to the Sabbath which Government might easily remove, were it really to set about it in earnest, but which, till this be done, Christians have to watch against; namely, the snares of the post on this day. In London, Christians have the truly valuable spiritual privilege of no post that day—as valuable to the public as it is to those engaged in the post-office. If all who call themselves Christian in the country were alive to this subject, and would unite, it might be so there, and Government might well act on the general desire already existing; but till this be done, and in cases where the letters are delivered on the Sunday in the country, private Christians have need to be watchful, to put aside letters of business; not to make the Sabbath a day of correspondence or of attending to letters, but to keep it undisturbed for its own holy and heavenly work.

thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord."—"Blessed is the man . . . . that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it." If you take your worldly pleasures, you forfeit Divine and heavenly blessings, and the superior joys which God gives to His people. You commit two evils. You are at great cost for human cisterns that will not hold the refreshing stream you thirst after, and you forsake the living fountain which would supply all your wants. No wonder those who only desire worldly pleasures find the service of God wearisome and contemptible. "Ye said also, Behold what a weariness is it, and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of Hosts."—(Mal. i. 12.) O how sad is the fallen state of that man, whom the Lord has created for himself, and to show forth His praise, when his Creator has to say to him, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel!"—(Isa. xliii. 21, 22.) This was the case with Israel, and brought down the threatening, "I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days, her new moons, and her Sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts." And when this was fulfilled, what a picture we have, in the lamentation of Jeremiah, of the desolation of Zion! The whole country was ruined, and the neglected house of God overthrown. "He hath despised his places of assembly. The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion."—(Lam. ii. 6.)

As to IDLE CONVERSATION, watchfulness will be very requisite. This naturally creeps in at every corner. The meeting with our fellow-worshippers, and walking with them to and from the house of God, is a temptation. It is so convenient, and seems to save such trouble, to get some worldly plan settled,

men easily get into the habit of it, and think there is no harm in it. Satan seems to delight to tempt us in this way. In the family circle it is very difficult to preserve the Sabbath spirit, and have our time, our heart, our whole spirit really consecrated to God. We need, then, David's prayers: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips; incline not my heart to any evil thing. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness." Nor imagine that this is needless rigour and preciseness. Our Lord himself admonishes us:—"I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy works thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." We shall most effectually guard against frivolous conversation, by giving to the sacred services of the day, and to meditation, reading the Scriptures and private prayer, their appointed time, and then in any leisure intervals, as far as practicable, rising to the apostolic rule: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." This is enforced by the touching motive, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

But we must go yet deeper to the root of all that is contrary to the due observance of the Sabbath—the evil heart of unbelief. To KEEP OUR HEART FROM VAIN THOUGHTS is requisite for sanctifying the Sabbath. This cannot be attained in any degree acceptable to God without real conversion. When our Lord is giving directions, then, about abstaining from evil words, He says, "Make the tree good, and his fruit good." Without a converted heart, we cannot truly serve God in anything, and oh, what cause we have to bless His name, this He has promised to give!—(Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) "Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of the

Holy Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Christ Jesus." This is the main thing first to be attended to, a thorough sound conversion of the heart to God. "Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit." God looks at the heart. He asks for that. "My son, give me thine heart." He charges us, "Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." This grieves him in Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee!" Oh, let not such empty unprofitable usurpers take possession of that, which might be the dwelling-place and the throne of the Most High, the inner temple, where he would delight to manifest his presence.

Such are the things to be laid aside. How can all this be done? How can our dead and dull hearts be quickened, our grovelling spirits be raised to things above? Through Christ only—Christ crucified; this is the great life-giving spectacle on which we must gaze. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are saved, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Come to the foot of the cross. Gaze on the dying Saviour. Think who He is, the Creator of all worlds, the only-begotten Son of God. See what form He wears: Even ours. Learn why He suffers and dies: "He was wounded for our transgressions. He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." His blood cleanses from all sin. Here learn to believe God loves you with intense, unutterable love. Notwithstanding all your sins, He cares for you; He is not willing that any should perish; it pleases Him to bruise His Son that you might be forgiven and accepted of Him. Jesus died for you. Believe this blessed truth. O may the Holy Spirit so set it before us, that He may soften the hardest stone; subdue, and melt, and warm

the most cold; and create in us the new heart, perfectly to love God, and worthily to magnify His holy name! And when you have realised such love as this, then remember that the Lord's-day is His day, and its due observance especially honours Him.

Having noticed those things which we are called on to lay aside on the Lord's-day, let us consider—

II. THOSE DUTIES WHICH WE ARE SPECIALLY CALLED ON TO PRACTISE.

The Sabbath, though a day of rest, is not one of indolence, but of blessed and holy diligence. It is an emblem of that future rest during which, it is said, "His servants shall serve him; they rest not day or night." The duties of this day are eminently spiritual; they are such as of ourselves we are quite unable to perform, except as we are filled with the Holy Spirit of God. If we are duly alive to this, our great concern will be to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We shall seek His help as our chief means of a due observance of any spiritual duty. In the expressive language of Scripture, "They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit, and the minding of the Spirit is life and peace." It is an unspeakably important baptism to be baptised by Christ with the Holy Ghost—to be filled with the Spirit. This made Barnabas such a blessing. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith." Now we may all obtain larger and larger measures of this heavenly gift. All that any have yet received should encourage them and others to look for more. As the first droppings of the clouds on the parched land precede the full shower, so there are yet larger supplies of this all-gracious Comforter, who helps our infirmities, and through whose presence our bodies become the temple of the Holy Ghost, dedicated and devoted to God.

1. AIM AT MAKING FAMILY AND SOCIAL CONVERSATION ON THIS DAY SPECIALLY CHEERFUL AND EDIFYING.—It is a festival; a day of holy joy and happiness. We will rejoice and be glad in it. "Is any merry, let him

sing psalms. Rejoice in the Lord always." Family singing of psalms and hymns well becomes this day. There is no need of gloom or severity on this day. Indeed, where the joyful sound is known, and, being justified by faith, the peace of God dwells in the heart, we cannot but rejoice. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous." What a happy family is the Christian's family, on the Lord's-day! He is relieved from the burden of daily toil, and free from the interruption of worldly feasting and company; he finds the real and highest enjoyment, with those nearest and dearest to him at home, in the delightful communion of the family circle. How short, how happy the day is; how gladly its return is welcomed, and what a secret strength it gives for every duty! When the heart is fixed for God, and full of His truth and love, the lips delight to speak of Him and for Him. Thus when the two disciples went to Emmaus on the Lord's-day (though not yet appointed as the Christian Sabbath), their conversation was all about Christ, their minds being filled with the great things which had just taken place, and presently Christ himself drew near, and their hearts burned within them. If our conversation on the Lord's-day be spiritual and edifying, and turned as much as may be to the eternal Sabbath in the mansions above—that counterpart of the Sabbath on earth—we may have, even here, foretastes of our eternal rest to come.

2. OUR MEALS ON THIS DAY SHOULD BE SIMPLE AND PLAIN.—It is not required to make this a day of fasting; but to make it a day of mere feasting, or to make the meals occupy the chief part of the time at home, is wholly unsuitable to its highest and best objects. It is desirable that the wives of the poorer classes, and the servants of the richer, should have no needless trouble in preparing our food, or in connexion with our table. The baker or other tradesman should not have his Sabbath rest disturbed for our indulgence. By prudence and forethought, in most places, not one of the family, whose health or

age allow of attendance, need be hindered from due attendance on public worship. Especially should a violation of the day, far too common, be watched against and avoided—the making it a day for giving and attending dinner-parties. This is just to prefer the world to God; to refuse to give time to our friends on the week-day, and to rob God of His time on the Sabbath. How many poor servants groan under the distractions of bustle, and company, and feasting on the Lord's-day—a practice which brings double guilt on their masters!

3. OUR PUBLIC DEVOTIONS SHOULD BE REGULAR AND SERIOUS, EARNEST AND CONSTANT.—To be at the house of God before the service begins, to be there regularly and constantly every Sabbath, to be there twice on the Sabbath; this is the general practice of the most valuable members of our congregations. In most parishes, in larger places, there are now three services in the day; and in such parishes ordinarily the parishioners may attend twice in the day. Thus Anna "departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers, night and day." Yet there may be a formal, self-righteous attendance, which may puff up and harden. The great thing is not merely to be present, but to offer "a pure offering" acceptable by Jesus Christ; to have the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, and to attend on the Lord without distraction. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This should be our constant aim; for this we should struggle through the services; and as we fail in this, should be deeply humbled under the iniquities of our holy things. In them we may learn the reality of Isaiah's confession, that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," and be led more simply and entirely to look to our interceding High Priest for acceptance. Let us earnestly, then, strive to enter His courts with thanksgiving; to seek a calm and fixed mind, and a holy fervour of spirit; to go heartily along with the whole service: desiring with the prayers, grieving in the

confessions, grateful in the praise, sympathising in the intercessions, mixing faith with the word we hear, and uniting in spirit in the sacraments, rejoicing in the admission of each fresh member by baptism, and feeding on Christ in our heart, by faith with thanksgiving, at the holy communion. For all this, we specially need to attend to that full direction, "Ye beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

4. FAMILY INSTRUCTION IS ALSO A VERY IMPORTANT DUTY OF THIS DAY.—How many thousands and tens of thousands of children and servants owe their religion, under God, to the Sabbath catechising, Scripture reading, religious instruction and simple and fervent prayers of a pious mother or father, mistress or master! It is a golden opportunity for children and servants; and half an hour or an hour redeemed between or after the public services for this duty, is the most precious seed-time that we perhaps ever have for doing good to those nearest and dearest to us. From the beginning the Word of God has made this duty clear. Abraham had special honour for this (Gen. xviii. 19); and God thus explicitly commands it to Israel, "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Texts, and collects, or short prayers, hymns, and catechisms, treasured up in the minds of the young, and repeated to their parents on this day, have enriched many a mind with seeds of blessing for future life. This good and venerable family custom, this habit of our Protestant forefathers, will not, it is hoped, die out of practice, but be revered and extended in our time.

5. THE EMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED MOMENTS SHOULD BE DEVOTIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL.—Our religious read-

ing should be of a practical and devotional character. Critical or controversial works, books of a metaphysical or intellectual cast may be valuable on other days, but they nourish not the holy feelings we wish to cultivate on the Sabbath. The Bible is always specially precious on this day; and happily there is no want of devotional works calculated equally to edify and instruct, to quicken every devout and holy and heavenly affection, and to direct and assist us in the daily course of the Christian life. Time should also be taken for meditation and calm reflection on our situation, our duties, our defects, our mercies, and our hopes; on the character and glories of the one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; on death and judgment, heaven and hell, and eternity. It is a day, also, for self-examination, with a direct view to humiliation and repentance, gratitude and newness of life. The season, thus diligently redeemed for God, becomes the very best seed-time for a harvest of future peace, holiness, and happiness.

6. WORKS OF CHARITY, AGAIN, BECOME THE SABBATH-DAY.—This accords with the special instruction of our Lord: it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-day; it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day. Thus, to visit the sick and the poor; to read the Bible to those who cannot or would not read it themselves; to do acts of mercy and compassion to those needing our help; to be teachers of the young in Sunday-schools, and care for the souls of those in obscure hamlets and villages, or neglected streets and courts in our great cities, is the duty and the privilege of all who know and love the truth, and can command leisure for it. Many a one who loves Christ, and is confined closely to the desk and the shop during the week, has risen on the Sabbath to the self-denial and the privileges of a faithful missionary, and has been honoured of God in turning many to righteousness, while he has been obtaining showers of blessings for his own soul. "For he that watereth shall himself also be watered." May every reader, whose situation

allows him to attain such usefulness, gladly thus employ himself for God! In the work of Christ every one may be fully employed, and the hearty zeal of the weakest, as well as of the strongest, is needed for the full triumph of His blessed kingdom.

7. THE MAGNIFYING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST is another part of the blessedness of this day duly observed. Unto all that believe, Jesus is precious—"the chief among ten thousand"—he is their "all in all." In the prophecies of the Old Testament, we are assured in the last book, "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." The prayers of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, end with the fervent aspiration, "Blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." One of the glowing and splendid features of the highest glory of the saints in the everlasting kingdom, as given in the last book of the New Testament, is, "They shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads." Thus, everywhere is this precious name set before us as ointment poured forth, full of fragrance and refreshment to the children of God. It is the glory of our Sabbath to be the Lord's-day. In it we are specially called to commemorate His glorious resurrection, with all the inestimable blessings that flow from it. It is the first fruits of a harvest of bliss and glory, of which millions will partake in the swiftly-coming day of Christ. Let us, then, with our whole heart, on this day enter into its sacred joy of glorifying the Saviour. Let us exhort each other: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!" As Jesus is magnified in our thoughts and affections, in our conversation and instruction, in our hymns and praises on this day, we do really rise to its full blessedness. Then we come nearest to that scene of glory, where they say,

"with one voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Such are some directions which may assist the reader in rightly employing the precious hours of the Sabbath. Only begin; only try and see if the Sabbath thus spent be not a day full of interest and full of profit.

III. Let us now, lastly, notice the BLESSEDNESS OF SUCH AN EMPLOYMENT OF THE SABBATH-DAY.—And truly this command kept abundantly verifies the promise, "In keeping of his commandments there is great reward."

1. IT GIVES SOLID PEACE OF MIND.—Persons who strive to make the Sabbath a day of pleasure do not find real satisfaction; they miss the very thing they sought. Persons who give the day to business, besides the slavish toil they go through, do not find it answer in the long-run for profit. Their end is unhappy. We have seen it again and again. I have seen families returning from wasting a Sabbath in parties and tea-gardens, the pictures of disappointment, weariness, and vexation; vexed with themselves, and uncomfortable as it regards all around them. But, on the other hand, "great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." To have the calm peace which arises from the approval of our conscience, and the sense of the acceptance and approval of our heavenly Father is indeed a sweet recompense for any self-sacrifice and self-denial, in going through the duties which have been pointed out to the reader. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him!" Letting "our requests be made known unto God by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving," is the way to that "peace of God which passeth all understanding, and keeps the heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

2. It obtains A DIRECT BLESSING FROM THE LORD ON OUR OWN SOULS.—He himself has pronounced it. He has made it a sign to assure us that He is our Lord, and will sanctify us: "Verily, my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you."—(Exod. xxxi. 13.) Nor was this confined, even under the Jewish dispensation, to Israel. We read in the same chapter, not only, "Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it; but, "Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer."—(Isa. lviii. 2, 6.) Indeed, we may be assured that, as God from the beginning blessed and sanctified the Sabbath-day, so He has to those obeying His command made it full of sanctifying power and blessing; and millions of happy Christians have found, by their joyful experience in keeping holy the Sabbath, that "they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." They have had every spiritual grace quickened and refreshed, and can say with the Psalmist, "He restoreth my soul."

3. IT DIFFUSES A LARGE BLESSING ON ALL AROUND US.—The example of every one, however humble, is influential on all within his circle. As an evil example infects others, and soon spreads pollution, so, blessed be God, a good example has great weight, and that to a larger extent than is at first manifest. Even those who mock at what they call the precise scrupulosity of the strict Sabbath-keeper at the time, are, in their inward conscience, often thinking the more highly of him, and approving a course which

they have not the Christian courage to follow. By and by, also, when the fruit of such a course begins to appear, perhaps one and another will say, "We will go with you; for we have heard God is with you." A family brought up in the strict observance of the Sabbath generally turns out well; and, on the other hand, religious professors, who yet see much company on the Sabbath, soon deteriorate, and their children often go off to the world. What day can be more suitable for fulfilling the command, to make known to our children the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done, to which is annexed the promise, that the "generation to come shall set their hope in God, and not forget his works, but keep his commandments?" (Ps. lxxviii. 4-7.) Diffusive blessings follow, then, the due observance of this day.

4. NATIONAL JUDGMENTS FOLLOW VIOLATIONS OF THE SABBATH, AND NATIONAL BLESSEDNESS IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH KEEPING THE SABBATH HOLY.—In the present state of Great Britain, it is a most solemn and awakening fact, that through railways and steam-vessels, there has been a prodigious increase of Sabbath profanation.* It has been proved by, in this respect, THAT NATIONAL SELF-CONDEMNING BOOK, "Bradshaw's Railway Guide," that Sabbath trains through the land are more than half as many as week-day trains. Above 800 trains are weekly insulting the Lord of the Sabbath, and proclaiming in the face of the sun, that tens of thousands of English Christians, in despite of the Christian example of Scotland, prefer their profit or their pleasure to obeying the plain command of God Almighty, and disbelieve equally His threatenings and His promises. Thus, every shareholder in every railway,

* Modern worldliness, complaining of the interruption which the Sabbath gives to commerce, and railing against those withstanding the desecration of this day, has become a worse Pharaoh than that hardened King of Egypt, who said, "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their work? Get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens."

who does not openly protest against this, and strive to remedy it, is involved in the guilt of thousands of travellers, and of all engaged in this unholy traffic. This was the crowning sin of Israel: "My Sabbaths they greatly polluted; then I said I would pour out my fury upon them." Jeremiah was to proclaim to Judah and Jerusalem the way of duty and safety in these words: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem: neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work; but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers; but they obeyed not." Still God promised, if they would hearken, the throne of Israel should be safe, and the city remain for ever; but added the solemn warning: "If ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." After our more open profanation of the Sabbath in railway traffic and travelling, and increased Sabbath violation, WE ARE SPECIALLY EXPOSED TO THIS THREATENING, and in the increase of very calamitous fires since, have seen something of its fulfilment. Among the sins of the last days of Jerusalem, this is recounted: "Thou hast despised mine holy things, and has profaned my Sabbaths." There is, then, great national danger from neglect of the Sabbath. Oh, that God's Word was but believed by British Christians! It is disregarded and slighted, and so our sins become aggravated till there is no remedy. But would we repent, would we "call the Sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, honourable, and honour him," immediately national blessings follow: "I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

5. REAL HELP IS GAINED FOR ALL WEEK-DAY DUTIES,

BOTH PHYSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY.—A remarkable testimony was given by an able physician, Dr. Farre, before a Committee of the House of Commons, of the necessity and advantage of one day's rest in seven from our ordinary employment, with reference to bodily health and mental powers, apart from all religious considerations. No human being can stand incessant toil and labour without rest, change, and relaxation. The suicides of some of our leading statesmen and lawyers has been attributed to their not giving the Sabbath to those sacred duties, which would have relieved and refreshed their minds from the wearing toil of their ordinary work.* A Sabbath given to God procures bodily and spiritual strength. Sir Matthew Hale, two hundred years since, testified this to his children: "I have found, by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of this day has ever had joined to it a blessing on the rest of my time; and that the week that has so begun, has been blessed and prosperous to me; and, on the other side, when I have been negligent of the duties of this day, the rest of the week has been unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular employment." And if it be so in earthly things, it is yet more so in spiritual things. The divine life is feeble when the Sabbath is carelessly spent — the divine life is ordinarily prosperous when the Sabbath is strictly observed. The soul is again and again revived, strengthened, and invigorated by Sabbath duties and privileges, for the

* Mr. Wilberforce, speaking of Lord Londonderry's destroying himself in 1822, says—"The strong impression of my mind is, that it is the effect of the non-observance of the Sunday, both as abstracting from politics, and from the constant recurrence of the same reflections, and as correcting the false view of worldly things, and bringing them down to their true diminutiveness. . . . . It is very curious to hear the newspapers speaking of incessant application to business, forgetting that by the weekly admission of a day of rest, which our Maker has graciously enjoined, our faculties would be preserved from the effects of this constant strain. I am strongly impressed by the recollection of the endeavour to prevail on the lawyers to give up Sunday consultations, to which poor Romilly (who destroyed himself in 1818) would not concur. If he had suffered his mind to enjoy such occasional remissions, it is highly probable the strings would never have snapped as they did from over-tension."

daily, arduous, and self-denying duties of the Christian life.

6. THIS OBSERVANCE OF THE EARTHLY SABBATH PREPARES US FOR THE HEAVENLY AND ETERNAL SABBATH ABOVE. The Sabbath is not only a shadow of good things to come, a type of the future rest, and some foretaste of its employments and joys; it directly assists us in preparation for the happy enjoyment of them for ever. Remarkable are the words of St. Paul to the Hebrews, "There remaineth a rest," a keeping of the Sabbath, "to the people of God;" as if he would thus join together Sabbath observance here with eternal rest hereafter—one a symbol, a stepping-stone, and a preparation for the other. Certain it is, the children of God delight in this holy day, and have been noted for remembering to keep it holy. The conscientious and constant observer of the Lord's-day, in the Church of Christ on earth, is the least likely to fall short of the heavenly rest. Availing himself of one of the most important means of grace which God gives, he is in the way for receiving those supplies of grace which make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. O Christians, cultivate, then, a heavenly spirit on earth; try to rise, on the wings of faith and love, in a due observance of the Sabbath, to those heavenly joys which are above, where Christ sitteth at God's right hand, looking forward to the happy time "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, and we also shall appear with him in glory!" It may be an effort and struggle at first—it may be a self-denial and sacrifice at the beginning; but it will become your rest and relaxation, your richest joy and consolation.

I do not feel it necessary to enter at large into the OBJECTIONS that men make to this duty. They have often been considered and fully answered. They all proceed not from faith, but from sight and sense, they would all set the flesh before the Spirit, and man before God: or the second table above the first, while the Lord of the Sabbath says plainly, "The first of all the commandments is, Thou shalt love the

Lord thy God with all thy heart;" placing duty to God first, and duty to man second.

I deny not the very great cost of fulfilling this command, in the case of many servants, clerks, office-bearers, and persons now in situations which require a constant breach of God's law; and which, if they retain, they are disabled from keeping holy the Sabbath. It may be like a martyrdom. Families may be dependent on them. Long habits may have made it familiar to them. It may seem like total ruin. Count the cost well. But then remember, a pure conscience is worth every sacrifice; the martyrdoms of faith are the way to its most blessed triumphs. Never did Latimer and Bradford, Cranmer and Ridley, do so much for the Gospel, and so much for their eternal blessedness, as when they gave their bodies to the flames. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Be assured, also, that God is mighty enough and faithful enough, rich enough and kind enough, to make the faith that would sacrifice even an Isaac in obedience to His plain command, fruitful in blessings in this life, as well as the world to come, infinitely beyond any that you could have had in the path of disobedience. Let me, then, earnestly exhort every reader, cost what it may, to begin at once a strict and conscientious observance of all the hours of the Sabbath; sanctifying the whole day to God. You must have seen, in the numerous passages of Scripture already quoted, how much God's heart is set on this subject! How repeated are His testimonies upon it! He knows how important this is to our salvation. He foresees all the ruin which the violation of the day brings on each soul, each family, each neighbourhood, and each kingdom; and, full of wisdom and love, he repeats admonitions in every age of the Church. His first book begins, in one of its early chapters, with an account of the sanctifying the day for all mankind. The law, the prophets, the evangelists, and the apostles, repeat the admonitions, or show the continued

observance of one day in seven; and the closing book of Scripture, again, in its first chapter, stamps it with its most endearing title, "the Lord's-day." If you neglect it, the whole voice of Scripture condemns you; and remember the solemn warning of your Redeemer: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." Consider, then, everything that would lead you to live in the neglect of the Sabbath, as Satan's snare to entrap that he may destroy your soul.

And let those readers who are aiming at obedience to this command, and to bring others to the enjoyment of its blessedness, be encouraged to persevere. We are going in the way all the children of God before us have trodden. Our great Head and Leader, when on earth, regularly observed the Sabbath. We read, "He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day." The apostles seem from the beginning to have observed the first day of the week for assembling together. On the very next Sunday after that on which the Lord arose, they were gathered together.—(John xx. 26.) The primitive Christians did so. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."—(Acts xx. 7.) This made it easy for all the Church, whether of Galatia or of Corinth, to make their charitable contributions on the first day of the week.—(1 Cor. xvi. 2.) This, then, is the pathway they have gone to meet their Saviour on earth, and to share His glory above. "Go thy way forth, then," Christian reader, "by the footsteps of the flock." Be watchful against all temptations, which will continually arise for the trial of your faith, and love, and patience; and in this and all other respects, "be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life."

XV.

THE BLESSING PROMISED ON THE SABBATH SANCTIFIED, AND THE PENALTY ANNEXED TO THE NEGLECT OR PROFANATION OF IT.

BY STEWART BATES, D.D.,

MINISTER OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WEST CAMPBELL-STREET, GLASGOW.

It is said of the first Sabbath, that God "blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."—(Gen. ii. 3.) The blessing spoken of has evidently respect to those sentient creatures which had just been called into existence, and especially to man, whom God had made in His own image, and placed at the head of this lower creation. And if the Sabbath was needful for him, and calculated to be a blessing and a benefit even in his state of innocence, how much more in his fallen condition? It is one of the blessings of Paradise preserved—a memorial of communion with God in a state of perfect holiness—and a blessed prelude of restored communion through the mediation of the Seed of the woman—the Saviour of the world.

It is all the more indicative of the supreme wisdom and goodness displayed in this institution, that the benefits of it were not confined to man. The sufferings of an oppressed creation under the tyranny of a fallen race were foreseen by the Creator; and the Sabbath was intended to set limits to that oppression. "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest; that thine *ox* and thine *ass* may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed."—(Exod. xxiii. 12.)

The benefit was every way enhanced by its being thus extended. Had the labour of cattle been permitted, the rest of the Sabbath to man would have been endangered. But He who made the inferior animals has a regard also to their wellbeing in this commandment. It brings a jubilee to the irrational creation. The cattle which labour are on that day released from the yoke. The finny tribes may sport in their native element, for the fisherman does not spread his net. The feathered classes may forget their shyness, for the sportsman discharges not his deadly shot. The herds and the flocks are not led to the slaughter-house. What a sweet memorial of Paradisaical harmony, where the whole animal kingdom, happy as their natures were capable of, did willing homage to their new-created lord; where neither fierceness nor timorousness could be discerned in any of them. And what a blessed prelude of a coming period, when the sufferings of an oppressed creation shall come to an end! "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

It may serve to elucidate THE BLESSING which belongs to the Sabbath, to consider the connexion in which it is placed with some of the mightiest or most merciful works of the Most High.

1st. It was constituted a MEMORIAL OF CREATION. "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it."—(Exod. xx. 8, 11.) The reason here assigned for the institution of the Sabbath demonstrates its universal obligation. It is not a reason which applies to any one age, or to one class of men rather than to another. All classes of men, in all ages of the world, are bound to worship and glorify the CREATOR, and the devout observance of the Sab-

bath is one of the methods Divinely appointed for that end. It recalls the time when the Supreme Architect "prepared the heavens, and set a compass upon the face of the deep; when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth." In six days was this work completed, and on the seventh the Creator rested and was refreshed; not that He could know weariness or exhaustion, but to intimate the perfect complacence He had in the contemplation of His own glorious work. "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." And that man might participate in the blessedness of his Creator, by a delightful survey of the stupendous fabric, the Lord gave him the Sabbath. And so from the beginning, the Sabbath was a means and a pledge of blessing to the whole sentient creation. The inferior animals exulted in the freshness and vigour of their new existence. Man was summoned to an intelligent and admiring contemplation of the Divine workmanship, and to adore the almighty Author of the universe. And the heavenly hosts, whose loftier powers enabled them more fully to appreciate the grandeur of the scene, gave utterance to their emotions in loud acclamations. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

2nd. To the seed of Abraham the Sabbath was also A MEMORIAL OF THEIR DELIVERANCE FROM EGYPT. "Keep the Sabbath to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. . . . . And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm: THEREFORE the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day."—(Deut. v. 12, 15.) This was no repeal of the original reason for keeping holy the Sabbath. That reason was embodied in the commandment itself, and cannot be repealed. But

this was a new and superadded reason. Next to the benefit of existence, the Israelites never had received so great a boon as their emancipation from Egyptian bondage. It was an exchange of excessive toil for rest, of cruel servitude for freedom, and of dark despair for comfort and joy. Then let them, on every return of the blessed day, remember their escape, and give praise to their Merciful Deliverer. "Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing."

3rd. The Sabbath was A SYMBOL OF SANCTIFICATION. This is evident from the following passage: "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth SANCTIFY YOU. Ye shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy unto you."—(Exod. xxxi. 13.) In this language there may be an allusion to the separation of the seed of Jacob as a peculiar people to the service of God; but we should come far short of the blessing intended, should we confine it to the visible or national holiness of that people. That glorious effect of Divine power by which a sinner is delivered from the dominion and defilement of sin is certainly included. Until man shall cease to need sanctification, the Sabbath remains a Divinely-appointed emblem of it, and a most effective means of promoting it. Where the Sabbath is lightly regarded, there are few persons truly converted, and religion acquires little strength. It cannot reasonably be doubted that the Sabbath has been the BIRTH-DAY of a large portion of the family of the first-born—the day of their new and better birth; and that it has done more for sustaining and perfecting the sanctification of believers than any other day—perhaps than all the other days together.

4th. The Sabbath has been constituted the EMBLEM AND MEMORIAL OF REDEMPTION BY JESUS CHRIST. This fact was, perhaps, indicated by the prophet, when, in the same passage in which he foreshows the resurrection of Christ, he intimates that the day on

which this event should take place would be a day of joy and gladness to the people of God (Ps. cxviii. 22, 24), in which sense the prophecy has been undeniably fulfilled for eighteen hundred years. The change of the day, however, at the opening of the Christian dispensation, from the seventh to the first day of the week, was the most unequivocal proof of the fact specified, that while previous benefits should not be overlooked or forgotten, one stupendous blessing, which transcends all others or in which all previous blessings are comprehended, should henceforward have the chief place in the hosannahs of the Sabbath. If the first creation was a blessing—to be "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" is a still higher blessing. If the escape from Egypt was a great deliverance—a marvellous display of Divine power and goodness, the redemption of lost souls from the guilt and power of sin is a more astonishing display of the love of God towards sinful men. Let this work, then, have the first place in the grateful recollections and joyful praises of the Sabbath.

There was no need for any formal repeal of the specification concerning the *seventh* day. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath; and he chose to mark, in the most emphatical manner, the relation it should bear to His great work, by providing that ever after, until the end of time, the day of His rising from the dead should be kept holy to God, and acknowledged and honoured as THE LORD'S-DAY. The inspired apostles embraced the opportunity of preaching to the Jews in their synagogues on their Sabbath, and probably, in condescension to their weakness, the change was introduced with the utmost tenderness; yet these honoured ambassadors of Christ, whose miracles attested their Divine commission, established in the Church, as a perpetual ordinance, the observance of the *first* day of the week as the Christian Sabbath. From the very day on which Jesus arose from the tomb, the first day of the week appears to have been observed for public solemn religious worship—for

united prayer, and preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Lord's Supper, and making contributions for pious purposes. Thus, with unanimous consent, while Divinely-inspired teachers were still in the Church, this day was received and acknowledged as entitled to bear all the honours of the ancient Sabbath, and the superadded honour of being THE APPOINTED MEMORIAL OF A COMPLETED REDEMPTION IN CHRIST. What more could have been done to raise the Sabbath in our esteem than to find it thus associated, in every instance by Divine appointment, with all the mightiest displays of the Divine beneficence towards man—the creation of the world, the deliverance of the chosen people from Egypt, the renovation of the heart unto holiness by the Spirit, and the eternal salvation of the soul.

In order to ascertain, clearly and certainly, what the blessing is which belongs to the Sabbath, the main question is, What saith the Scripture? The institution is from God; and His own word must determine the nature and the measure of the benefit to be expected from it. Hear, then, the testimony of an inspired prophet: "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil."—(Isa. lvi. 2.)

The connexion in which the passage stands leads our thoughts to New Testament times. The preceding chapter details a series of blessings which never were realised by the Church until the coming of Christ. And this prophecy contemplates a period when the house of God shall be called "an house of prayer for all people." At that period, the man who keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, shall inherit the blessing of God. When it is alienated from His service, and yielded to sloth and the indulgence of the flesh; when it is spent in secular labour, or in the commission of sin, it is polluted, and the blessing is forfeited. To keep the Sabbath is of the same import as to sanctify it; to employ the time of

it in those holy exercises in which man holds fellowship with his Maker. The man who does so is blessed:—

1st. He is exempted from, and raised above, the toils and solicitudes which are the common lot of men on other days. The supreme Lord of all has given him a release. By royal charter there is secured to him rest on that day—rest to his cattle, to his servants, to his family, and to himself. What multiplied benefits are comprehended in this appointment! The merciful Saviour often performed His miraculous cures on that day; and even since miracles have ceased, it continues to be the great healing day still, relieving the overstrained muscles, and curing the wounds and bruises of the flesh. Nor is its soothing and sanatory power less needed, or less sensibly felt, by the harassed and jaded spirit. Its welcome repose, and calm but reviving religious exercises, impart an energy and elasticity to the mind, unknown to those who profane the Sabbath in the pursuit of sensual pleasure, or who barter it away for secular gain.

2nd. He is blessed in the cultivation of his intellectual and moral nature. Whether he possesses five talents or but one, the Sabbath is his chief day for exercise and improvement. On that day he holds converse with the wisest and best of men that ever lived, becomes familiar with their character, and makes their knowledge and their principles his own. He has opportunity for cultivating the hallowed domestic affections, which to the purest minds constitute so large a part of earthly enjoyment; of being a blessing to his family, if he has one, and of being blessed in their society in return. Who can doubt that the want of family training is one chief cause why morality and religion sink so rapidly among a people who have lost the Sabbath? How much of blessing is there in the devout perusal and study of the sacred volume! He who is so employed, however limited his attainments in secular learning, will not fail to derive elevation and refinement from the exer-

cise—more exalted views, more enlarged benevolence, and a more thorough perception of all that is honest, and lovely, and of good report. As a consequent blessing, it is found that Sabbath observers, as a class, are more successful in their secular pursuits than Sabbath violators. They are more steady in their application to business, and more careful to keep a conscience void of offence. Hence even the men of the world, who are far from loving religion for its own sake, often give precedence and preferment to such persons when in their employment. And so the path of piety and that of true wisdom is the same. "Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

3rd. He is blessed in his observance of the public ordinances of religion. So is it declared in the passages to which we have already referred. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; . . . for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."—(Isa. lvi. 6.) Let not the impatient reader overlook the richness of this passage, from a hasty impression that, because he finds reference in it to God's holy mountain, to the house of prayer, and to offerings and sacrifices, it must have been intended for the Jewish people only. If acquainted with the writings of the apostles, he must be aware that all these images are commonly used by them in reference to the New Testament Church and its worship. Does not Paul speak of believers as having come unto Mount Sion, and to the heavenly Jerusalem?—(Heb. xii. 22.) Does he not describe the Christian Church as the "house of God, ... the pillar and ground of the truth?"—(1 Tim. iii. 15.) And does not another apostle represent true Christians as an holy priesthood," whose office it is to present

"spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ?"—(1 Pet. ii. 5.) Although the images, therefore, are taken from Old Testament worship, the prophecy contemplates New Testament times. The calling of the Gentiles is predicted in the beginning of the verse, and uniting of Jews and Gentiles in one Church, and their worshipping together in one loving society, are set forth in the end of it. And now let us mark the prominence assigned to Sabbath observance at that happy period: "The sons of the stranger, who keep the Sabbath from polluting it, . . . every one who keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer."

It is not Sabbath observance, in the Scripture sense, that does not include in it a devout attendance on the House of God. Beasts of burden may feed and rest on the Sabbath, or, under the impulse of youthful vigour, they may feed and play. Such a Sabbath is what their nature is capable of, and it is pleasant to see them enjoy it. But when man, to whom God has given an immortal soul, and the Sabbath to prepare for eternity, is satisfied with the Sabbath of the jaded ox, or of the well-fed carriage horse, he has miserably mistaken his duty and his destiny. Such as remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, take loftier aims, and spend the day in more hallowed exercises. Nor are these found to be either hurtful to their health or a drawback on their enjoyment. It may not at first be their own choice to come to the house of God. Either their parents or other Christian friends may be God's instruments in bringing them. But when he reveals himself graciously unto them, they exclaim, with the King of Israel, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! . . . Blessed are they who dwell in thy house." "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thine holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I

praise thee, O God, my God." It gives joy to the famishing to be invited to a feast, where they may satisfy their hunger without scruple and without charge. It gives joy to the sick when a physician of surpassing skill administers to their complaints, and comforts them with the assurance of restored health. It gives joy to the prisoner under condemnation to receive the tidings of pardon, and of speedy release. Still more exquisite, as well as more enduring, is the joy of the contrite sinner, to whom a Saviour is revealed in the house of prayer. Such an one is taught to say, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."

It is farther promised to those who keep the Sabbath, that they shall be *accepted* of the Lord in their religious services. It is esteemed an honour and a privilege to be accepted of an earthly sovereign, even when the meeting is but momentary—a matter of customary homage on the one side, and of courtly condescension on the other. When it happens that very weighty consequences are suspended on the reception, it becomes a question of absorbing interest how to secure a favourable audience. The case of Nehemiah, when he craved permission of the Persian monarch to rebuild the city of Jerusalem; and that of Esther, when she sought the reversal of the fatal decree which had doomed the Jewish people to the slaughter, afford striking illustrations. But never was there presence so august, nor interests so momentous, as those which engage the soul of a sinner when he draws nigh unto God. He comes before the sovereign of the universe, that he may confess his sins, and implore pardon. He comes as a self-condemned rebel, to cast himself on the mercy of the Most High, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. He comes to bewail his spiritual bondage, and to ask

deliverance from those enemies by whom he has been enslaved. He comes to seek an interest in the great salvation, a title to eternal life, and that renovation of heart by which he may become qualified for the enjoyment of it. In respect to importance and magnitude, what interests can be compared with these? How precious, therefore, the promise of a gracious reception to those who keep the Sabbath from polluting it!

We must transcribe one other beautiful passage from the same inspired writer: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The spiritual character of the Sabbath is here unfolded, and the holy nature of the services that it demands. And this accounts for the fact, that the passage now read is so commonly referred to by irreligious men, as proving that such a Sabbath as Old Testament writers delineate would be equally impracticable and intolerable. Supposing we should admit their inference, in so far as they themselves are concerned, the argument for the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, and of such a Sabbath as is here described, would be in no degree impaired.

Let us see what would become of other precepts of the law, when subjected to a similar test. The tenth precept forbids covetousness. But to a multitude of mankind such a restriction is impracticable and intolerable. Must we, therefore, conclude that this commandment has ceased to be obligatory? The seventh commandment prohibits licentiousness; and the Saviour shows that "whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery

with her already in his heart." To a multitude of mankind this commandment is impracticable and intolerable. May we, therefore, conclude that it has ceased to be binding? The sixth commandment prohibits murder; and the apostle teaches that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;" and that "he who loveth not his brother abideth in death." To a large proportion of mankind this commandment is impracticable and intolerable. Shall we, then, conclude that it has become obsolete? The apostle Paul takes a different line of argument when he says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." If the repugnance of men's hearts to the law of God could shake its authority, it would have been repealed at the foot of Mount Sinai; for the Jewish people "could not endure that which was commanded." The objection is evidently absurd. The very purity of the Sabbath law affords proof of its Divine origin and moral obligation. NONE CAN OBSERVE IT, IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF IT, BUT SUCH AS ARE BORN FROM ABOVE. And this is equally true of all the precepts of the Decalogue.

The concluding part of the message above quoted coincides with the eloquent but figurative language of Moses, when setting forth the exuberant goodness of God to His ancient people, the seed of Jacob.—(Deut. xxxii. 9-14). In other passages the same condition is described in plain language. "It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments, ... that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: blessed shalt thou be in the field: blessed shall be thy basket and thy store: the Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face; and all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee."

Such was the actual condition of this people when

they were obedient. And in the obedience required, Sabbath observance held a high and conspicuous place. In one remarkable passage, we have seen that this prosperity is promised to Sabbath observance alone—for this reason, probably, that the right observance of the Sabbath tends so powerfully to implant and establish moral principle in the hearts of men, and to restrain from every kind of transgression. As the Sabbath law stands in the centre of the Decalogue, and cannot be removed but on principles which tend to abrogate the other precepts of it, so it will be found, in fact, that Sabbath obedience constitutes the centre of all sound morality. It binds the soul in submission to God, and necessarily creates and sustains a supreme regard to all His commandments.

The passages heretofore cited have, for the most part, had reference to *individuals*. But the Lord of the Sabbath is also KING OF NATIONS, and He makes known His will to them also, in their public and corporate capacity. He sent the following message to ancient Israel, by the prophet Jeremiah, in a backsliding age:—"Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates: thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work; but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. . . . . And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day, but hallow the Sabbath-day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever. . . . . But if ye will not hearken unto me

to hallow the Sabbath-day, ... then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem." This address was delivered shortly before the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the King of Babylon. But the people persisted in their evil courses. "The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burned the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all the palaces thereof with fire. . . . . And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah—UNTIL THE LAND HAD ENJOYED HER SABBATHS; for as long as she lay desolate SHE KEPT SABBATH, to fulfil threescore and ten years."

In the same connexion the language of Moses is very solemn and instructive: "And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. . . . . And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land ENJOY HER SABBATHS, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in

your enemies' land; even then shall the land *rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths.* As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it."—(Lev. xxvi. 27-35.)

Sufficient evidence has been adduced from Scripture to show that the Divine Author of the Sabbath has, in all ages, made it a BLESSING to those who have rightly improved it. And the passages last quoted are not less explicit in declaring the penalty annexed to the breach of this commandment. It is granted that, as the law was given to the Jews, there were penalties annexed to disobedience which are not now binding; and some have inferred from this, that the law of the Sabbath itself has been abolished. But the argument is not conclusive. The time is not remote when certain kinds of theft in Britain were visited with capital punishment. This penalty is no longer in force; but the statute prohibiting theft is as much as ever a part of British law. The same holds true in respect to the Divine law. There were penalties to several precepts under the Mosaic dispensation, which are not continued under the Gospel. The disobedient son was condemned to death on the accusation of his own parents. That penalty is not now in force; yet the fifth commandment has lost nothing of its authority. The adulterer and the adulteress were punished by death. That penalty is not continued under the New Testament; yet the seventh commandment has lost nothing of its authority. If the remission of a particular penalty proves the repeal of the law, the fifth and the seventh commandments, and perhaps several others, must be cancelled as well as the fourth. But the commands existed from the beginning, before these penalties were annexed; and they remain in the plenitude of their authority after the penalties have been disannulled. "Think not," said the Saviour, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

There is one lesson, however, contained in these

enactments of the judicial law, which ought not to be passed in silence. These penalties were an expression of the judgment of the Almighty in regard to the flagrant guilt of the sins so punished. They proved that Sabbath breaking, disobedience to parents, and adultery, however lightly they are regarded by some men, are in His views iniquities of such magnitude, that those convicted of them deserve to die. Now the essential demerit and guilt of these offences continues undiminished. The coming of Christ was certainly not designed to relax the obligation of the moral law, or to excuse man's disobedience. He came to "magnify the law, and make it honourable." "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." In respect to several commandments, the violation of which was formerly punished by the hand of man, it has plesaed the Sovereign Lawgiver, under the present dispensation, to reserve the right to punish entirely in His own hand, and to prohibit man from interfering. Yet the whole teaching of the New Testament proceeds on the assumption, that the entire moral law is perpetual and unchangeable, and that the work of the Saviour in fulfilling it, and enduring its penalty, has added new sanctions to the law, and rendered every breach of it more criminal and inexcusable.

Apart, however, from the judicial code, and the penalties that were inflicted by the civil magistrate under the law of Moses, there are many instances mentioned in the Scriptures, in which the sin of Sabbath breaking is held forth as highly provoking to the Almighty, and as one which he will not fail to punish. When the Lord provided manna for the Israelites, they were commanded to collect on the sixth day the supply required for the seventh. When some of the people, notwithstanding, went out to gather manna on the seventh day, their offence was instantly marked by the following rebuke:—"And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to

keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."—(Exod. xvi. 28, 29.) The facts of this arrangement were remarkable, as respects their bearing on the law of the Sabbath. On six days in every week the people went out to gather manna. On each of five days of the week they could provide for one day only, for the manna became putrid when kept over until next morning. Having no other means of subsistence, necessity was laid upon them to have a daily supply. But on the Sabbath they must not gather. Two days' supply are, accordingly, given on the sixth day; and what is kept over on the intervening night continues, in this instance, perfectly sound and sweet. And how is all this to be accounted for? No possible account can be given, but that it was the will and the appointment of the Almighty. And all this continued to occur, without failure, or variation, for a period of nearly forty years. It was the uniform experience of all the millions who inhabited the wilderness. To have had the law of the Sabbath engraved on brass, and hung up in every tent throughout the camp, accompanied with the injunction that the people should recite this commandment every morning, would have been accounted a strong testimony to the value and importance of the Sabbath. But viewed as an expedient for fixing this law, practically and indelibly, in the memories, the habits, and the consciences of the entire people, it would have fallen infinitely short of the arrangement above recited.

Yet the Israelites forgot the Sabbath as well as other Divine commandments, and were punished for their disobedience. Of all the judgments pronounced against them during the life of Moses, the most severe was, *that which excluded them from the land of promise, and condemned them to die in the wilderness.* Now the Lord himself declares by the prophet, many ages

after, that their breach of the Sabbath was one chief ground of their exclusion from Canaan. "Moreover, also, I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness, they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and *my Sabbaths they greatly polluted:* then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. . . . . Also I lifted up my hand unto them. . . . . that I would not bring them into the land which I had given; . . . . because they despised my judgments and walked not in my statutes, but *polluted my Sabbaths.*"—(Ezek. xx, 12, 13, &c.) This passage shows clearly that a sentence which shut Canaan, and doomed to death in the wilderness a whole generation of people, was a penalty for Sabbath breaking.

Another remarkable judgment executed on this people was, *their banishment from their own land, and their captivity in Babylon.* We mention it, because it was a national judgment, because it was preceded and accompanied by a long series of calamities and distresses, and because it continued for a period of seventy years. Now, of this danger they were warned by Moses before his death, and were informed that the neglect and profanation of the Sabbath would be thus punished: "And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours; and I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and I will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. *Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths,* as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; *even then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths.*" This warning, as we have seen, was emphatically renewed

in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. The apprehension of such a penalty accounts for the horror and alarm with which the good regent, Nehemiah, testified against the Sabbath breaking which he witnessed among the people who returned again from the land of the Chaldeans: "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, *and profane the Sabbath-day?* Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? *yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel, by profaning the Sabbath.*"—(Neh. xiii. 17, 18.)

To sum up this argument; it is evident that the law of the Sabbath has been placed by its Divine Author in the centre of the moral law—the law of which the Redeemer has said, that "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than that one jot or tittle thereof shall fail;" that the breach of this law, on the part of the ancient Israelites, was constantly ranked among the sins of greatest aggravation—as one of the sins on account of which the Lord forsook his people, and gave them over to the power of hostile nations; that they were solemnly warned beforehand that this was a sin which the Lord would not pass by or excuse; and when the threatened judgments had fallen on them, in their banishment and bondage in Babylon, they were distinctly certified by the messengers of God, that their Sabbath breaking was one principal cause of all their calamities. By what conceivable plan could the supreme Lawgiver demonstrate more emphatically his regard to this institution, and his purpose to uphold it, in the administration of his kingdom of providence?

But, has the Sabbath law passed away among the shadows of the ancient economy? May it now be slighted without loss, and trampled on without danger? These are questions which may be subjected to the test of fact and experience—of observation and history. It is instructive to pursue the inquiry

in individual instances—to mark, on the one side, how Sabbath observance is connected with industry, moral principle, and a useful life; and how Sabbath desecration is connected with irreligion, and is very often the certain forerunner of a course of immorality and crime. But our limits admit only of a hasty glance of this topic, viewed on a broad scale. In countries covered with wood, parties wishing to settle judge of the soil by the timber found growing on it; and they do so, not by comparing a few trees in one district with an equal number in another; the judgment is formed by the general character of the timber as found in both. If a district is on the whole well wooded, and the trees of large growth, it is concluded that the soil is rich and the situation favourable. We invite the friends and opponents of Sabbath observance to make trial of it by a similar test.

Let competent observers take a survey of the nations at the present day, and carefully mark their condition, economically, morally, and religiously; it will be found that those which take the first rank are the nations in which the Sabbath is most venerated, and its injunctions most strictly observed. Do we meet intelligence and moral principle—the elements of social order and prosperity—superior skill, combined with patient industry? Do we find such an amount of integrity, and of that sense of honour which mimics it, as lays a foundation for commercial confidence in the transactions of business? They will be found only in Sabbath-keeping communities. We ask for benevolent and philanthropic institutions—infirmaries, lunatic asylums, and penitentiaries; we ask where the infirm and aged are cared for, the fatherless and the widow; where the youth are trained up in sound knowledge, and efforts made to extend to benighted lands the benefits and blessings of education and of true religion? These things will be found to prosper only in Sabbath-keeping communities. We search for a people capable of

understanding and appreciating rational liberty—who can make effectual their claims to free institutions, and control, at the same time, the blind impulses and excesses of democracy; who respect and defend salutary laws, which guard impartially the interests of the poor and of the rich. This wise people, when found, will also be a Sabbath-observing people.

Let TRAVELLERS who have visited various countries bear witness, whether the nations have sustained any loss, or incurred any penalty, who have rejected the holy Sabbath. They will testify (for the fact is notorious) that these nations almost universally have lost the Holy Scriptures also, and have sunk under the power of infidelity and superstition. Let FOREIGN MISSIONARIES say whether they have ever met a tribe who were enlightened in their minds, and prosperous in their condition, while strangers to the Sabbath; or whether they ever heard of a tribe who had been reformed, civilised, and elevated, without being led to observe the Sabbath. Let CITY MISSIONARIES, and others intimately acquainted with the social condition of our population, speak expressly as to the effect of Sabbath observance, or Sabbath desecration, on the character and condition of different classes among ourselves. They *have* borne testimony, that the loss of the Sabbath, involving as it does the loss of the Sabbath school, of all right family training, and of a stated attendance on public ordinances, is speedily followed by the loss of intelligence, of habits of order and cleanliness, and ultimately of that *character*, and *credit*, and *confidence*, which are the best half of the whole stock-in-trade of the middle and lower classes of society.

There is no nation on the earth so much indebted to the Sabbath as Britain; and there is none which has so much to lose by renouncing it. In the mighty struggle now in progress between light and darkness, between reformation and corruption, the Sabbath is essential to almost every form of philanthropic effort.

It has been found extremely difficult to prevent the masses from sinking in the scale of education and moral principle, even with a plentiful supply of the Scriptures, of churches, and Sabbath schools, and with all the advantages for family training which the leisure of the Sabbath affords. How dark, then, would our prospects be were our Sabbaths increasingly yielded up to worldly pursuits! For three hundred years we have been mercifully delivered from that cruel despotism which forbids the Book of God to the people. But were Sabbath sanctions and observances consigned to oblivion, the impetuous tide of business and pleasure would, ere long, sweep away the Bible. And what hope would there be for proper family training when both parents and children should be engrossed by the world all days alike throughout the year?

We ask those who complain of Sabbath restraints, what advantage they expect to raise from its being superseded? They would appropriate it to relaxation. But where has it ever been preserved to the people as a day of rest and enjoyment, when the Divine sanctions, which equally forbid labour and recreation on that day, have been once removed? The nations of the Continent have been little embarrassed with the Sabbath for centuries. What have they gained by that exemption? Alas! they are like a ship in a storm, and on a perilous sea, without pilot, or chart, or compass. They have renounced the law of the Lord, and He has given them up to their own counsels. Their wise men are as fools. They would need to be sent with an ancient monarch to the beasts of the field, to learn that primitive lesson, that "the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." The loss of the Sabbath would tend to reduce our own country to a similar condition. The stated assemblies for religious worship would rapidly decline, and the

effects of the change would, in a brief space, be palpable everywhere. Uprightness would fail in the market-place. Honour and integrity would seldom be found on 'Change. Duplicity would perjure itself in courts of justice. Caprice and passion would fill the jury box. Corruption would preside on the bench. The Book of Sports, perhaps recommended by Royal proclamation, would again cause the house of God to be deserted. The people, rendered incapable of liberty, would be crushed by despotism—rising from time to time, with savage ferocity and giant strength, to execute vengeance on their oppressors; and communism would have its carnival, when the possession of property would be the highest crime.

It can awaken no surprise that atheists and infidels are hostile to the Sabbath; for as long as that institution is preserved, the glorious Being with whom they are at war never can cease to be worshipped and obeyed. Nor is it strange that the unprincipled and profligate are opposed to the Sabbath. As long as it stands, vice must be detested. Equity and justice, purity and benevolence, must be had in honour; and the ideal paradise of communism never can be realised. Nor should we wonder that unconverted men, of every class and order, should disrelish the Sabbath—as a day of holy rest in the service of God. But that there should be found men, having a creditable profession of religion; nay, Christian men, whose piety ought not to be questioned, ready to lay sacrilegious hands on the Divine law—to pluck the fourth commandment out of the moral code, and place it, where God never placed it, in the ceremonial code—excusing or extenuating Sabbath desecration, Sabbath mails, Sabbath passenger-trains, and Sabbath traffic—is a matter unspeakably to be deplored.

XVI.

THE SABBATH—ITS RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE A NATIONAL DUTY AND A NATIONAL BLESSING.

BY THE REV. JOHN ANGELL JAMES,

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER OF BIRMINGHAM.

If I appeal in this treatise to the subjects of the British empire at large—from the Queen upon the throne to the meanest individual of the realm—it is not that I have the vanity to suppose I shall be heard by an audience so comprehensive and so august; but because, in common with my fellow-labourers in this good work, I present a topic which is interesting *to* all alike, and demands *from* all the most serious and solemn attention. The man in whose bosom glows the ardour of patriotism will not allow his modesty to hush his voice in silence, when, however obscure he may be, he can, by lifting it up, multiply the echoes of an injunction from heaven, on obedience to which depends the welfare of his *country*. It is, therefore, not only excusable, but commendable, in the humblest member of the greatest nation, to address his country when he has anything for the promotion of its welfare to communicate, provided it be uttered in language at once serious, dignified, and respectful.

The Sabbath is for nations collectively, as well as for the Churches, families, and individuals of which it is composed; and though the religion of a country is but the amount of the practical piety of its individual inhabitants—and thus there can be no hope of national regeneration which is not based upon the regeneration of individuals—it is well sometimes to consider the aspect which this subject bears towards

the obligations and the interests of the empire, viewed in its aggregate form. I appeal, then, to my countrymen, viewed as citizens as well as Christians, and beg that attention from their patriotism which would possibly be refused me by their religion. Yet why should these two be separated? Or, indeed, how can they be separated? If patriotism mean, not what it signified to the ear of an ancient Roman, the wish and the right to crush other nations, to build upon their ruins the greatness of his own, but a sincere desire, by every legitimate means, to promote our country's welfare, then is this virtue nothing else but true religion viewed in its relation to the land of our nativity.

I crave attention, then, to the following remarks from every inhabitant of these United Kingdoms into whose hands the treatise might fall. The substance of many, if not most of them, may have been anticipated by some of the writers who have preceded me in this fellowship of literary labour on behalf of the holy Sabbath. This is what must be expected, considering that no specific subject of discussion is allotted to me, and that I have only to deliver a concluding practical address.

I. RELIGION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE WELLBEING OF A NATION.

When I say religion, I do not mean, of course, by that term any organised system or systems of ecclesiastical polity, or any mere ritual observances; on the construction and nature of these, even good men differ. But there is no conviction in which good men are more entirely agreed than that these are not identical with religion itself, but are only the means of producing or conserving it. By religion is meant a real, intelligent, cordial submission of the whole man to the revealed will of God. In the absence of such a religion as this, the most scriptural form of government and of sacramental observance will avail nothing for individual salvation, and very little for national welfare.

There is a twofold way in which religion promotes the wellbeing of a nation: the *first* is, by its own nature and tendency. It is actually necessary to the existence and continuance of national organisation. A nation of atheists could not be formed so as to endure. The dreadful experiment was tried by the authors and abettors of the first French Revolution, and the result has been written upon the page of history in characters of blood and horror, for the instruction of the world to the latest posterity. In the absence of religion the fabric of society is without a basis, and equally without cement; a mere heap of loose materials, where each one has a principle of repugnance to all the rest. Religion, by teaching men to regulate and control their appetites and passions by reason enlightened by revelation—by subjecting selfishness to benevolence—by giving the sense of an ever present God, and of accountability to Him—by adding the motives of future rewards and punishments to those derived from the present advantages of virtue—by the enforcement, not only of duties common to all, but appropriate to each—by directing peculiar attention to the anti-social vices, and to the social virtues—by its Divine support given to the authority of government and the force of law—and also by the encouragement it offers to the practice of righteousness in the promised help of the Holy Spirit;—in all these ways promotes, as must be obvious to every thoughtful mind, the welfare of nations as such.

Nor is this all, for—*secondly*—providential appointments, arrangements, and interpositions, add their influence to the natural tendency of religion to promote national prosperity. Is it not declared in Scripture that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people?" So that, while iniquity as a cancer eats into the vital strength of an empire, the judgments of the Almighty, like the lightning's flash, scathe and destroy it from without. What illustrations, as well as proofs, of this are furnished

by the faithful page of history! Where are the mighty empires of antiquity, which once made the earth to tremble? Scarcely a vestige of even the very ruins of some of them remains, to guide the foot of the traveller to the site and centre of their former greatness. What caused their destruction? The inspired seers of God's chosen nation tell us with one voice, "SIN." Read and recollect the history of modern Europe, and see what countries have drank deepest of the cup of tribulation in the times in which we live. Are they not France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy—countries where tyranny, persecution, superstition, and infidelity have most extensively prevailed? If nations, as such, are ever rewarded or punished, it must be in this world, where only they exist; and though we are no longer under the covenant of temporal promises, we may still expect that God will put forth, in some intelligible manner, the tokens of his favour, or the expressions of his displeasure, according as the nations offend him by their impiety, or please him by their religion.

It is evident that the most religious nation, other things being equal, must, by a kind of moral necessity, be the *strongest*, inasmuch as the subjugation of selfishness to benevolence must concentrate general attention upon the public good. It must, at the same time, be the *wealthiest* and most prosperous nation, because the vices that drain off its riches will be suppressed, while the virtues which replenish the public treasury will be promoted. And then it follows, of course, that such a people will be the *happiest*, so as to realise the beautiful language, and accomplish the patriotic words of the Psalmist, when he says:—"It is he that giveth salvation unto kings; who delivereth David his servant from the hateful sword. Rid me and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished

after the similitude of a palace; that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen may be strong to labour; that there may be no breaking in, nor going out; that there may be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."—(Ps. cxliv. 10-15.)

From all this it is evident that sin is not only rebellion against God, but treason against our country; while piety is the purest and most efficient patriotism. The Bible is the best book written yet, or which ever will be, on the true political economy of nations; and without exhibiting a system of theoretic principles on population and wealth, lays down those precepts on human conduct and the social relations, in the practice of which any nation will be prosperous and happy.

II. The general observance of the Sabbath by a nation is essential to its religion.

This observance is itself one great duty of religion, and it is necessary to the due performance of all other duties. Religion consists of two parts—piety and morality. By the first we understand a right state of heart towards God—that is, the existence of a supreme love, arising out of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; expressed by complacency in God's nature, reverence for His character, obedience to His commands, gratitude for His services, and all those acts of worship which He himself has enjoined in His Word. By the second part of true religion, we mean all those moral duties which we owe to our fellow-creatures and to ourselves. Now, even if it were contended that we could perform the latter without the observance of the Sabbath, we could not the former. The Sabbath is God's institute; and, at the same time, his memorial set up by and for himself first of all, and then given to man for his own benefit. It is God's witness to the world as its

Creator and Redeemer, and is ever delivering a most solemn and impressive testimony for Him as regards His existence, works, attributes, and authority. It is a weekly proclamation from heaven of the claims of the Maker, Upholder, and Governor of all things. On the dawn of every Sabbath a voice goes forth over the earth,—"There is a God. Jehovah is He! He made and redeemed the world,—arise and worship Him." It is true that men have other witnesses for God, especially the Bible, the Church, and the Saviour, but how heedless would they be of all these if the Sabbath were forgotten. They could meet for Divine worship, and thus acknowledge God on other days, if they did not assemble then! But would they? Is it probable? There *are* meetings on other days, but by whom are they attended? Only by those who keep holy the Sabbath, and by only a few of them. So that if the Sabbath were given up, public worship would soon be given up also, and the people would abandon all appearance of religion, and assume the aspect of a nation of atheists. How impressive a testimony for God are the silence and repose of the day of rest. How the closed shops and the open churches, and especially the stream of population flowing through the streets at the hour of worship into the sanctuaries of religion, remind us of God. This observance of the Sabbath is the visible type—the outward expression of a nation's religion, and is a far more emphatic testimony for Him than the buildings themselves in which the congregated multitudes assemble. Not the lofty spire nor ample tower; not the gorgeous pile, upon which architecture, sculpture, and painting have lavished their affluence, and which, by the power of association, fills the rapt soul with all the shadows of departed centuries, bear such an impressive witness for God, as the intelligent minds, and holy hearts, and heaven-tuned tongues, gathered on the sacred day beneath its ample dome to worship God at His own selected and appointed time.

While the observance of the Sabbath is of itself one

part of our national religion, consider how it tends to support all other parts, whether they relate to God or man. Let any one examine the varied exercises of the Christian sanctuaries—the prayers, the psalmody, the reading of the Scriptures, the eucharist, and especially the sermon, and he cannot fail to perceive their intimate connexion with public morals and genuine piety. It might be said, that the general circulation of the Word of God, and religious books and tracts, renders the people less dependent upon the pulpit than they once were. But is it not a fact, that where one sinner, even now, amidst all this abundance of religious publications, is converted from the error of his ways by private reading, twenty or even fifty are reclaimed by hearing sermons? Preaching is God's chief instrument of regeneration—this is the power of God unto salvation, and so it must ever remain. Nothing ever will, nor ever can, supersede the preacher and the sermon: the press will never supplant the pulpit. Public speaking, in its power, is in strict accordance with all the principles of our mental economy. There is a singular adaptation in the living voice, and "human face divine," to the work of instructing and impressing the soul of man, the chords of which are made to vibrate to the various modulations of the speaker's voice. What lessons of purity, temperance, and industry; of relative duties, amongst which subjection to magistrates holds a high place; of justice, integrity, and benevolence, are taught every Sabbath; and as the result, even when the soul is not truly converted to God, what a multitude of base thoughts, unworthy inclinations, shameful designs, destructive plans, suggested by ambition, avarice, or voluptuousness, are stifled in their birth, and their execution happily prevented. How much of the peace of families, the order of society, and the wellbeing of nations, depends, then, upon the ministry of the Word of God! We know very well that education, regard to public opinion, the power of law, and the salutary dread of justice, all help to repress crime and

promote virtue; but what multitudes are there who need something else besides all these to restrain them from transgression, when temptation is urgent and the hope of impunity is flattering. And what can supply this so well, and what *has* supplied it so frequently, as the ordinances of Divine worship, and the preaching of the Word of God? These do more to keep up our national morality than the stringency of law and the terror of its penalties—the solemnities of trial and the most dreadful inflictions of justice. Let any one conceive of the myriads of churches, chapels, and school-rooms, which are open every Sabbath to the millions upon millions of children and adults who are assembled within their walls, and also of the amount of moral and religious instruction which is thus made to bear upon these masses of our population, and imagine, if he can, the quantity of sin which is *kept* out and *rooted* out of the public mind, and the amount of virtue and piety which, through God's blessing, is introduced. Were all these churches, chapels, and school-rooms closed, even for a few months; were sermons discontinued, and Sabbaths employed in business or amusement, not only would the influence of religion over the minds of the pious be well nigh extinguished, but the bond of moral obligation over the unconverted would be relaxed, the laws of God and man would be trampled under foot, and an unlawful reign of unbridled sin commence. "Blind is that country, and wretched must it be, where pure religion is not taught, and where the worth of the faithful watchmen is not known, till the want of those true friends of the prince and of the people introduces envy, strife, confusion, and every evil work."

I will strengthen and recommend all I have said on this subject, by the testimony of a pious and learned foreigner. Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, the eloquent historian of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, has the following remarks in a work lately published, entitled, "*Germany, England, and Scotland:*"—"There is no people to whom religion is so necessary

as the British. The material, agricultural, manufacturing, and mercantile interests are so predominant, that were not religion to counterbalance them, the nation would be undone. The energetic activity which distinguishes the Britons; those gigantic enterprises that characterise them; the founding of an immense empire in India; the gates of China, which her powerful hand has wrenched open; that creation of Australia; those expeditions to the poles, and every climate; that abolition of the slave trade, and slavery itself;—all these giant-like labours require that a pure religion should animate the people—that oil should be always pouring into the lamp, and that a holy moral force should inspire, moderate, and direct these efforts. If the Britons, and even the Germans, are much better colonisers than the French, and the nations under the Papal rule, it is to the Gospel they are indebted for it. Neither is this all. Even the admirable political institutions of Britain have need of the rule of faith; the liberal in politics should be conservative in religion. If the people of the United States, notwithstanding their many elements of disorder and dissolution, are not only still in existence, but increasing more and more in power and importance, it is because they are the sons of the Puritans. From the very moment that England begins to yield, nay, from the very moment she ceases to press onward in religion, we think she will decline towards her abasement, perhaps to her ruin. Evil elements are not wanting. She possesses, to a greater extent, perhaps, than any other country, a low, impious, and impure literature; and the efforts made to diffuse it among the public are very great. If ever the floodgates which religion and morality oppose to these infamous publications are thrown down, the torrent will break forth and overwhelm the whole nation with its poisonous waters."

And then, a little farther on, speaking of the Sabbath, Dr. D'Aubigné says:—"I do not hesitate to say, that this submission of a whole people to the law of God is something very impressive, and is probably

the most incontestable source of the many things that have been showered on the nation. Order and obedience, morality and power, are all in Britain connected with the observance of the Sabbath. Amidst the activity which pervades all things, the bustle of the towns, and the energy with which the inhabitants pursue their earthly callings, what would become of them if they had not a day of rest in which to recruit themselves, and laying aside things temporal, which are seen, to look forward to things eternal, which are unseen? Yes, no doubt, if a remedy is not found out for the evil, immorality and disorder will be brought into England by these new roads. The old Puritan habits are disappearing. This claims the earnest attention of the friends of religion and their country. We say again, the severity of England as to the Lord's-day and other institutions is, in our eyes, an essential feature of the national character, and an imperative condition of the greatness and prosperity of her people."

Such a testimony from such an authority will, it may be expected, have much greater weight than anything my pen could write, and I therefore adduce it, though a long extract, to corroborate what has been already written in this treatise.

III. THE GENERAL AND CORDIAL CO-OPERATION OF ALL CLASSES OF THE COMMUNITY IS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH, AND TO RESIST THE ENCROACHMENTS UPON ITS SANCTITY WHICH IN THIS AGE ARE IN PROGRESS.

The Sabbath is a national blessing, and by the whole nation its preservation should be sought. All classes and all individuals should regard it, to a considerable extent, as the palladium of our safety, and rally round it as for the defence of one of our best and brightest hopes. It is within the reach of every inhabitant of the land to do something for his country's weal or woe. That was a beautiful description of patriotism which Demosthenes gave, when, speaking of the Athenians, he said, "It was a prin-

ciple fixed deeply in every breast, that man was not born to his parents only, but to his country." This principle should be rooted in the soul of every Briton, and with it the religious truth, that no man lives more effectually for his country's best welfare than he who promotes the sacred observance of the Sabbath. At how cheap a rate may this kind of patriotism be maintained! Fleets and armies would be unnecessary for that land of which Omnipotence saith, "I will be a wall of fire round about it, and the glory in the midst thereof."

In this great duty even Royalty itself may set the example. The monarch is as much bound by the fourth commandment as the subject. ILLUSTRIOUS QUEEN of these realms, enthroned not only in the palace, but in the hearts of your loyal and devoted subjects, long may God preserve you to an admiring people, the pattern of every personal and relative virtue; and ever may He vouchsafe to you His grace, to acknowledge an authority higher than your own, and to enable you, in subjection to Him by whom Kings reign and Princes decree justice, together with your Royal Consort, to keep holy the Sabbath-day, that so the sanctity of the Court, as well as its purity, may always be maintained, and an example continue to be given from the throne of that righteousness which exalteth a nation! No record of your Majesty's personal conduct, where all is so pleasing and so welcome, is more honourable to yourself, more gratifying to your pious subjects, or more conducive to the welfare of that great nation over which your sceptre is stretched, than those accounts which are published of your Majesty's attendance upon the solemnities of public worship. The jewels which sparkle in the Royal diadem reflect a lustre that is dim compared with that which will be derived from your Majesty's observance of God's holy Sabbath.

Nor let THE RULERS OF OUR COUNTRY be backward to follow the pattern which may be set them in this particular by their Royal mistress. As they

would guide with a steady hand and a clear vision the helm of the state, and obtain from above the wisdom which is profitable to direct—as they would bring upon their counsels the blessing of Him without whom nothing is wise, or strong, or good, let them take heed in their own households, and in the various departments of the state over which they severally preside, to remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Let not the officers and servants of the Government be employed unnecessarily in the affairs of secular business, and thus be prevented from obeying the commands of a still higher monarch than she whom it is their honour and delight to serve as their only rightful sovereign upon earth. Should a spirit of commercial cupidity, grudging the day of rest to hands already full, to minds already jaded, and hearts already engrossed with the cares of business, wish to open the Post-office to its daily avocations and pursuits, may we ever have a Government which will resolutely resist the effort, and secure to the metropolis this opportunity of repose and enjoyment. Instead of this, may the Government listen to the voice of public opinion, now so generally and so loudly expressed, for the closing of the provincial post-offices, and thus give to the country the privileges enjoyed by the metropolis.

Senators of the land, representatives of the people, makers of our laws, and guardians of our liberties, take heed to yourselves, to keep this, the law of your God. What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? You are set as a city on a hill, which cannot be hid. I ask not for the interposition of your power* to enforce or uphold the *religious observance* of the Sabbath. Men cannot be made pious by Acts of Parliament, nor compelled by statute to worship God. But legislation may be righteously employed in protecting

* The author must, on this point, be considered as uttering only his own view of the subject. Some of his brethren would go farther than he on the right of Parliament to interfere with Sabbath observance, and some not so far.

the poor man from oppression and from being robbed, by the craving, unsatisfied, and remorseless spirit of trade, of his opportunity to give rest to his weary limbs, and to worship his Creator. The Sabbath is especially the poor man's day—it was for him above all that the day was instituted, viewed as a repose from toil. It is given to him by a Divine provision; it is his by vested, chartered right. God has commanded *him* to lay aside the implements of his toil, and he has commanded his employer to give him an opportunity for so doing; and he looks to you, our legislators, to stand between him and his master, when that master would take from him his day of rest and refreshment. His body as well as his soul needs this respite from labour; and never is the authority of law more rightfully or mercifully interposed, than when it is done to secure to the sons and daughters of poverty this day, to go, if they so will, to the house of their God, and think of a world where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

There is another view of the subject, as connected with the interests of the labouring classes; and that is, the effects which the abolition of the Sabbath would have upon their wages and their comforts. His labour is the only article which a working man has to carry into the market, and this will, of course, be cheapened down in price according to the quantity which is offered for sale, till at length he will get only as much for his seven days as he formerly did for six. It is on this ground, then, that legislation should interfere to protect the interests of the poor man from the ever-encroaching spirit of trade, and to secure to him his hebdomadal rest, leaving it to his judgment and his conscience as to the way in which he will spend his Sabbath when he has got it. How senseless, then, is the cry against legislation for preventing Sabbath trading, as if it were oppressing the poor, when they, in fact, are the very persons whose interests most require it! But, after all,

considering the extreme difficulty of making laws that can be effectual and impartial, many are of opinion that no means but such as are moral—that is, the united power of example, the pulpit, and the press—will ever reach the case, and secure that which every enlightened patriot, and every sincere Christian, most ardently desires—the more general and sacred observance of the Lord's-day.

But leaving legislation out of consideration, we may ask, and have a right to expect, senators, you would concede what we require—your example and your influence on behalf of the sacred day. You are supposed, from your situation, to have a deeper interest in your country's welfare, and better opportunities for knowing what will conduce to it; both God and man look for more from you, and the nobles of the land, than from any other class of laymen. You have station and influence: give both to God. Neither senatorial rank, nor the ermine of the judge, nor the coronet of the peer, so much adorns humanity, or becomes it, as genuine piety. Not only be found, then, in the sanctuary of God, revering His authority, but abstain from your Sunday parties, from travelling, and from every other violation of the Sabbath which would throw the weight of your example into the scale of our national sins, and, as a necessary consequence, into that of our national decay.

Editors and Publishers of our Periodical Literature, and especially of our Newspapers, remember the tremendous responsibility which attaches to you. There is no class of men, next to the ministers of religion, whose life and labours stand in such close connexion with national religion and morals as yours, nor any which have such a powerful influence upon them. It is yours not merely to reflect the public opinion, but to form and guide it; not only to delineate and establish, but to mould, to a considerable extent, the national character. Consider the momentous results of your high vocation. You speak to the multitude in our crowded cities, and to the scattered

few in our rural districts, and are ever impregnating the mass of our teeming population with the seed of moral good or evil. A single paragraph out of the many that are ever flowing from your pen, by patronising, or even palliating evil, may perpetrate a moral mischief in the minds of thousands, which can never be estimated but by the Omniscient mind, and which, by all your future labours, however you may lament it, you may never be able to undo. It is matter of unutterable regret, that too many of your profession, in its lower grades, are doing all they can to subvert religion; and, as the most effectual method to accom plish this dreadful purpose, are endeavouring to blot out the Sabbath from our calendar. Sunday newspapers are the bane of our country's religion and morals, and are doing all that in them lie, if not by argument, by act, to form a nation of atheists. By some of these the poison of a concealed, and in others of an undisguised infidelity, is circulated through the length and breadth of our country, and an appetite for irreligion is both created where it did not previously exist, and is fed where it did. It is calculated that no less than thirty million copies of infidel and demoralising publications, a large proportion of which are issued and sold on the Sabbath-day, are annually circulated among the population of this country; and that one of these Sabbath-breaking, irreligious newspapers consumes nearly one million more stamps yearly than the thirteen religious newspapers. Unhappy men, who write for these works, thus to prostrate your talents, and to hire out your faculties in contravening the Laws of God, subverting the foundations of religion, destroying public morals, and ruining the souls of men! If you have no mercy upon your country, whose best interest you are poisoning—if none for your fellow-creatures, whose souls you are ruining—have mercy upon yourselves. The time is coming, or if not the time, yet the eternity is at hand, when, in the lost spirits whom you have seduced by your profane and licentious publications,

you shall see the mischief you have perpetrated. It may furnish matter of fresh ribaldry, and an occasion for more wickedness, to remind you of that awful day when the nations shall be gathered to the bar of Him whom you now make the object of your impious jests: but every line by which you are now endeavouring to write down the truth of revelation, the reality of religion, and the sanctity of the Sabbath, will come to your recollection, and light upon your spirit as a spark from the quenchless fire, and be as a pang inflicted by the venemous tooth of the never-dying worm.

It is to be lamented, also, that in the higher departments of journalism, in those which command the attention of nations, there are few writers who are zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and who advocate with courage and consistency the claims of the Sabbath. When shall the time come that those noble intellects, which pour forth in such endless profusion, and with such rapidity, their suprising thoughts, in periods and paragraphs which are read with delight by millions, shall feel it to be the highest enjoyment of their pens to promote religion, by calling upon nations to "remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy?"

Ministers of Religion, we turn to you, as to our strongest hope—as to the most earnest, constant, and zealous advocates of Sabbath observance. You are appointed to be the guardians of every Divine institution, and of this especially, we might almost say pre-eminently. Christ intrusts to you, above all men, the safe keeping of this precious memorial of His glorious and finished work. Be faithful to your trust. The Lord's-day is *your* day, as the other days of the week are given to the rest of mankind for their occupations. You can do little or nothing without it. Give up this, and you have surrendered your chief means of usefulness. Consider, then, your pulpit as one of the high places upon earth, from whence, as an eminence, you may send over a careless and worldly-minded generation the fourth

solemn commandment of the Decalogue. Enforce the obligations of this holy day in all their strictness, and in their full extent. Listen to no compromise. Heed no railing. Shrink from no discussion. Turn your back upon no enemy. Take counsel of no time-serving policy. Disregard, as so many empty, angry gusts of wind, the reproaches cast upon you, as morose enemies to the happiness of the people; and go on steadily and boldly to urge the performance of a duty, in which *you know* are bound up the interests of your country, and of each one of its inhabitants. Let your precepts be enforced by example, remembering that he who preaches the sanctity of the Sabbath should, beyond all men, observe it in his own conduct. The sins of teachers are the teachers of sin; and of all Sabbath breakers, none are so guilty before God, nor do such mischief among men, as they who, whatever they say, teach men, by their actions, to break the commandments of the Divine law.

Next to ministers, if not even before them in influence, are the heads of households. PARENTS, read, mark, learn, and tremble. Yours is a delightful, but, at the same time, an awful duty. It is on the family hearth, and around the family altar and table, that the citizen and the Christian should be trained. The family is, to a considerable extent, the mould of both the Church and the State. As, then, you would have the one full of intelligent and sanctified patriotism, and the other of evangelical piety, let your domicile be a scene of cheerful sanctity on the day of holy rest. I say of *cheerful* sanctity; for as the Sabbath is a feast-day, and not a fast-day, your dwelling should be enlivened by smiles of gladness from every countenance, and be vocal with thanksgiving and the notes of melody. There can be no objection to the feast of fat things, provided it be prepared the day before, and none are employed or cumbered about cooking or much serving. Let God's good creatures be enjoyed, and they who have adored Him as the

God of grace in His own house, bless Him as the God of nature and providence in theirs; the *family* table is, when not spread by Sabbath breaking, a good sequel even to the *Lord's* table. But still piety should be the presiding spirit of the whole, which, like a ministering angel dropped from the skies, should be there to bless the household. One of the loveliest scenes which ever poetry has delighted to portray, is that of a Christian family amidst cleanliness, neatness, and order, keeping holy the Sabbath, where the parents, by an intelligent and cheerful religion, blended with kindness, gentleness, and love, diffuse an air of peace and delight over the circle of happy beings that rejoice around their board, bend before their altar, or pour out their gleeful, yet chastened feelings round their chair. Parents, as you would be saved from the misery of seeing your children turning aside to crooked ways, and especially as you would have the joy of seeing them walking in the truth, teach them from the dawn of memory and conscience to reverence the Sabbath of the Lord.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS, learn and do *your* duty. Inculcate this obligation upon the group of children collected on your bench, and looking up to you for instructions every week. You know the moral dangers to which, from their peculiar situation in life, they are constantly exposed. You have read, if not heard, the confessions of many of those who have been brought by vice to an ignominious end, that it was Sabbath breaking which first lured them from wisdom's ways, and initiated them into the course which terminated at the gibbet. Think of the numbers of the labouring class whose children are collected in our Sabbath-schools: how large a portion of the population they form! You are employed, by educating them, in forming the character of those who are the base of the pyramid of society. Take heed, therefore, what you do, and how you do it. Whether our operative classes shall be virtuous or

vicious; whether they shall be consigned as a prey to the wolves, the vultures, and the serpents of infidelity, which are ever waiting and watching to devour them; or shall be gathered under the eye and arm of the good Shepherd and Bishop of souls, depends much upon you. Be diligent, anxious, earnest, and persevering in teaching them to keep holy the Sabbath-day. Be it one great object in all your instructions to impress this upon them. Read to them, and hear *them* read, in the most devout and solemn manner, all the passages which relate to the Lord's-day. Cause them to commit all these to memory, and endeavour to give light to their judgment, and tenderness to their consciences on this momentous subject.

MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS, AND TRADES PEOPLE, how much is it in your power to promote or obstruct the religion, and by this means, the interests of your native country. Shall the time ever come when, by the just and generous principles upon which commercial affairs are carried on—by the personal religion of those who are engaged in its pursuits—by their restriction of all secular affairs to the six days of labour—and by the consecration of their profits to the cause of religion, "holiness to the Lord" shall be written upon *our* merchandise as it used to be upon that of ancient Tyre? Let this be the hope, the effort, and the prayer of every Christian tradesman. In order to this it is essential that the day of sacred rest should be rescued from the pursuits of commerce. Not only close your shops, your counting-houses, and manufactories, which is already generally done, but do not in any covert way employ any of your servants in works of labour on that day which God has set apart for hallowed repose. Do not open your business letters, much less set out on journeys, or return home from them, on the Sabbath. Remember that by such conduct you are not only sinning yourself, but leading others to sin. Money gained thus, brings no blessing with it. The manna gathered on

that day will breed worms on it. Forego the profits of such unhallowed trading. "Better is a little that a righteous man hath, than the riches of many wicked." "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

PROFESSORS OF RELIGION, our strongest appeal is to you. To whom SHOULD we appeal if not to you, and to whom can we appeal with so much justice and propriety? You are commanded to be the light of the world, on this point as well as on every other; "and if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!" In that hour when you joined yourselves in fellowship with the Church of Christ, you entered solemnly into covenant with God, and in effect swore to be His liege subjects—to honour all His institutes, to observe all His statutes, and to obey all His laws: and sustaining a high place among these, is the Sabbath. Will you break, forget, or think lightly of, your bond? Will *you* ever be seen trampling under foot your Lord's command, and your own engagement to obey it? Will *you* be the person to proclaim revolt, and set the example of rebellion? Will *you* buy and sell and get gain on the holy day? Will *you* travel for business or for pleasure on this day? Will *you* read newspapers, have parties, saunter away the hours over the dinner-table and the wine? Will *you* be heard pleading for a relaxation of the strictness of Sabbath observance, and seen joining with those who are seeking its desecration? Professors, will you forsake the Lord's side, and go over to that of the aliens? What, *you* who profess to know the worth of the soul, the importance of salvation, the danger of being lost not only by the practice of sin, but by the love of the world? What, you who know, or profess to know, the connexion between the right observance of the Sabbath and personal religion? Ye followers of Christ, will not ye keep up the remembrance of His work in our world? Ye servants of the living God,

will not ye maintain His authority in His own domain? Ye friends of religion, will not ye keep up that institute on which religion so vitally depends? Ye lovers of the souls of your fellow-creatures, will not ye stand forward to promote that on which more depends for arresting the tide of perdition, and advancing the cause of salvation, than anything else that could be mentioned? We call upon you, by all these considerations, to come forth and to rally round the law of your God. Upon you, under Him, it depends whether the Sabbath shall remain or not. The children of this world love it not; yea, hate it, with regard to its original design as a season of devotion, however much they love it as a day of rest and worldly pleasure. They would get rid of it if they could; and desperate, though unavowed and unorganised, efforts are being made for that purpose. If it be retained in its *religious* and *spiritual* character, it must be kept by you. Some of the Tractarian party would gladly introduce again the Book of Sports, in connexion with the Book of Common Prayer; and after the sacrament in the morning at church, would have athletic games on the common in the evening. Thus, superstition is confederate with commercial cupidity, pleasure-taking, and infidelity, to rob our country of its best and surest defence against irreligion, immorality, and the consequent judgments of Almighty God. Against this felonious and sacrilegious confederacy, those who worship God in the spirit must be banded together in a holy alliance. But no organisation that may be set up can be sufficient, in the absence of individual and personal example; and therefore, let every one who shall read this treatise, each man *by* himself, and *for* himself, consider that it is not only a subject for the nation, but for *him*. We are too apt to lose ourselves in the crowd and to sink individual obligation in that which is social. It is thus that we are enabled, by the deceitfulness of our hearts, to shift off our duty from our conscience, to that which in fact has

no existence, except in our own imaginations—the collective conscience of a nation or a Church. Let us avoid the subtle method of escaping from our duty, and let us each re-study the subject of the Sabbath in its spiritual design, the perpetuity of its obligation, the devout manner of its observance, the infinite blessings of which it is the means of conveyance to the children of men, and the moral desolation which would be occasioned not only by its abolition, but by its general desecration. And witnessing, as we do, the encroachments upon it, which are perpetually made by its avowed enemies, and even by its simulated friends, let us, each one for himself, be roused to a more conscientious, exact, and spiritual obedience in this particular of the law of our God.

Britons, my last appeal is to you. Look at your country—"great, glorious, and free"—the temple of religion—the sanctuary of freedom—the mart of commerce—the hall of science—the school of learning—the greatest subject of history, and the loftiest theme of song—the land of your birth, your pride, and your boast;—look, I say, at your unequalled country, and be filled with gratitude and gladness. But rejoice with trembling. Portents are not wanting, which indicate that Jehovah has a controversy with the nation. Can you forget the famine, so mysterious in its origin, which raged last year over Ireland, and the north of Scotland? Can you be ignorant that pestilence may be now lurking among the nations of the Continent, like a lion couchant, ready to spring upon us?* Can you be unmindful of the financial crash, which has lately convulsed our commercial fabric to its very foundation? Can you be unobservant of the unquiet heavings with which the European nations are agitated, and which threaten us with the earthquake of another war? Is there nothing in all this to awaken solicitude, and excite

* This treatise was written in the year 1848. Since which, the Lord hath poured out the vial of His judgment upon us: yet, alas! with how little moral and spiritual benefit, in consequence of our unbelief.

alarm? Is this the time, and are these the circumstances, in which you should insult the authority, kindle the wrath, and provoke the vengeance of Almighty God, by trampling under foot His laws, and subverting His institutes? I implore you to consider your ways, and, by the prevalence of a spirit of national religion, raise a conductor over your country, which, when the tempest shall rage, will protect her from the flashes of Heaven's fiery indignation. You would be patriots: remember that the truest patriotism is not that which passeth off under the name of glory, but which standeth by religion as the strongest pillar of the state, and by the observance of the Sabbath, as the main prop of religion, and which maintains its position by the ark of the Lord, amidst the scorn and contradictions of men, who have no eyes to see the indissoluble connexion between the ruin and impiety of nations.

I shall now conclude in the eloquent language, and not more eloquent than true, of an American writer:—"But for the moral power of Sabbatical institutions, whose property or reputation would be safe for a single day? Much as the Lord's-day is profaned in this country, even now it does more than our magistrates and prisons, and other legal terrors, to perpetuate and multiply our social, civil, and religious things. Take away this barrier, and you open the flood-gates of vice and irreligion upon a godless and suffering people. You may try to prop up your free and admired civil institutions, but all your efforts will be in vain. The overflowing scourge will pass through, and neither you nor your children can hope to escape.

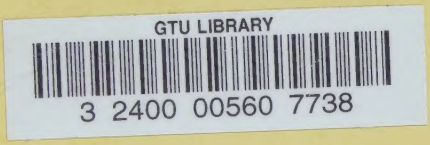
"Who and where is the patriot that would thrust out our ship from her peaceful moorings, on a starless night, upon an ocean of storms, without anchor or rudder, compass or chart? The elements around us may remain, and our giant rivers and mountains. Our miserable descendants also may multiply and vegetate, and sit in moral darkness and putrefaction.

But the American character, and our glorious institutions, will go down into the same grave that entombs the Sabbath, and our epitaph will stand forth a warning to the world: THUS ENDETH THE NATION THAT DESPISED THE LORD, AND GLORIED IN WISDOM, WEALTH, AND POWER."*

* Dr. Humphrey on the Sabbath.

THE END.

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE "CHRISTIAN TIMES,"
121, FLEET-STREET, LONDON.



GTU Library
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
For renewals call (510) 649-2500

All items are subject to recall.